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THE DANISH WEST INDIES

"How the colonies were actually governed; what the colonists did at work and play; how the mother country stamped her image upon them, and to what extent the lineaments of that image were modified by contact with local forces—these are matters that interest the reader of to-day."—W. R. Shepherd.

CHRISTIANSTED, ST. CROIX, IN 1815

TRANSLATION OF LEGEND (omitted from this illustration): "*Representation of the wharf on the island of St. Croix in the West Indies with 1 the fort Christianswern 2 the Danish church, 3 the provision house 4 the weighing house 5 the English tavern 6 Great King street 7 the quay 8 Sophia Frede[rikke] battery 9 Louisa Aug[usta] battery 10 the custom house 11 dwelling house 12 the Harmony 13 Baron Britton's house 14 Bladwel's house 15 Church street.*"

[In the original, three ships flying the United States flag may clearly be seen in the harbor. The remaining vessels have the red and white Danish flag. The soldiers are on dress parade with their white trousers and red coats; the women, black and white, are clad in colors equally striking; while the planter-aristocrat who is riding proudly off is shielding himself from the hot sun with a bright red parasol. Horses, mules, goats, oxen, and a pig, all help to lend animation to this lively scene.] [*Frontispiece*]

THE DANISH WEST INDIES

UNDER COMPANY RULE

(1671-1754)

WITH A SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTER, 1755-1917

BY

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION

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MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

Since the opening of the Panama Canal, the attention of the United States has been drawn more and more to those Caribbean and Gulf regions, which were, until comparatively recent times, the economic center of the New World and the source of a considerable part of that wealth which kept the wheels of industry running in the Old. If Tobacco was King in the seventeenth, and Cotton in the nineteenth, then Sugar surely held the scepter in the eighteenth century.

This book was written before the United States began the negotiations that have resulted in the transfer of the Danish West Indian islands to the United States. The increased interest of Americans in Caribbean lands, and the scarcity of authoritative historical books upon the subject will it is hoped justify its appearance now. It assumes a certain curiosity on the part of the reader, first, as to how the Danish-Norwegian state became interested in the islands off the Spanish Main, and second, how so small a state has managed to retain its hold for nearly two centuries and a half.

The pages which follow record an episode in the time when Sugar was King. They are the result of an attempt to identify and appraise a number of official and other papers found in the Bancroft Collection at the University of California. These documents had come from the Danish West Indian islands, and were first brought to the writer's attention by Professor Henry Morse Stephens under whose inspiration and guidance the subsequent investigations were carried on. The paucity of the printed material dealing with the history of Danish colonization in America led to a search in the Danish libraries and archives for further light. The entire archives of the Danish West India and Guinea Company were found substantially intact in their repository in the state archives building of Denmark near Christiansborg castle. Except for the labors of

a few scholars in search of genealogical and biographical information, the collection had to all appearances scarcely been touched.

With such a wealth of material to go through, the writer cannot claim to have exhausted his subject, but he hopes to have made more intelligible than hitherto the story of one of those commercial joint-stock companies that were so closely associated with the seventeenth and eighteenth century exploitation of New World resources.

Treated by itself, colonial history is well-nigh meaningless. Only when considered as part of European history—indeed, when related somehow to universal history—does it become vital. It is obvious that the political and economic development of American colonies cannot be adequately followed without giving considerable attention to the forces that prompted, and largely guided, commercial ventures. The present work is the history of a company composed mainly of Danish business men intent upon embracing such commercial opportunities as the New World seemed to offer them. Their headquarters were in Copenhagen, their factories, or trading centers, in the West Indies and on the Guinea coast. Business was the chief aim, the establishment of a colony an incident, of their endeavors. Yet one cannot be understood apart from the other.

The rôle played by Denmark-Norway in tropical colonization was indeed not large and not infrequently the interest of the English—or American—reader will center in what the men of the North saw and heard in the West Indies, rather than in what they did there. Yet, there was enough of what might be called economic solidarity in the Western commercial world to lend the Danish occupation a genuine interest. Despite local differences, the experiences of the Danes were fairly typical of those of the Dutch, the French, the English, and even the Spanish merchants and administrators. The physical conditions with which all had to contend were nearly identical. The political and economic ideas which the Europeans who sought to earn their livelihood in the West Indies brought with them had many points of similarity. In fact, the population of many of the islands was surprisingly cosmopolitan.

In the eighty-four years of its existence, the Company led a varied and interesting life. During its early years it survived the competition of Dutch, French, English, and Brandenburg business, whether private or corporate. With the opening of the new century it experienced the welcome, if rather hectic, glow of a period of prosperity induced by a general European war, that of the Spanish Succession. In the era of speculation and depression that followed the return of peace, the Danish Company had its experience with paper money expedients as a cure for hard times.

In the history of the slave trade and of that tropical agriculture which it was calculated to promote, and in the growth of the idea of self-government, the experience of the Danish colonies is suggestive. Though St. Thomas has been popularly associated with buccaneers and pirates, some of whose exploits are recorded in the following pages, it has scarcely been suspected heretofore that a considerable part of Captain Kidd's "treasure" found its way to the warehouses and ships of Danes and Brandenburgers on the island.

But what was after all far more important than random calls by pirates was the fact that the Company helped to supply Europe with sugar, cotton and what are still known in Danish shops as colonial wares. Moreover, it served as a training school for statesmen who after this experience found the transition from the business of the Company to affairs of state less difficult to compass.

The writer has not hesitated to let the actors tell their own story, but to obviate needless obstruction to the narrative, and for the benefit of those readers who may care to probe deeper into the subject, such illustrative and statistical material as could not well be included in the body of the text has been incorporated into the appendix. Many names of characters and places not familiar to English readers in their Danish form have been anglicized where possible. The following list of Danish equivalents for the rendering of proper names given in the text is offered in the hope of preventing undue confusion for such as may care to consult the original records. Christian = Christiern; George = Jörgen; Peter = Peder, Pieter;

John = Jan, Johan, Johannes, Jens; Oliver = Oliger; William = Willem, Wilhelm; Severin = Sören; also *Unicorn = Enhiörningen; Unity = Eenigheden; Electoral Prince = Churprinz;* the *Peace = Freden;* the *Gilded Crown = den Forgyldte Krone;* the *Red Cock = den Röde Hane.*

To friends who have assisted him in numerous ways, the writer wishes to express his gratitude. Chief among these is Professor H. Morse Stephens, Sather Professor of History at the University of California, to whose generous encouragement this work owes its inception. He has followed the progress of the investigations with a never-flagging interest, and has always been ready to place his great store of knowledge at the writer's disposal. To Professor Charles H. Hull of Cornell University for patient guidance and valued instruction during a year at that institution as Fellow in American history, to Professor Herbert E. Bolton of the University of California for constructive criticism, to Mr. Herbert I. Priestley for valuable bibliographical hints, to Professor W. R. R. Pinger and Miss Florence Livingstone for suggestions as to style, sincere thanks are due. To the officials in the Danish archives and libraries whose services were generously placed at his disposal, the author takes pleasure in acknowledging his debt, and especially to former *Rigsarkivar,* Dr. V. Secher and his staff at the state and provincial archives, Dr. V. Christensen of the *Raadstuearkiv,* Professor Knud Fabricius, Dr. Ove Paulsen, the officials of the Royal and University Libraries, and to Fru Anna Backer. Their uniform courtesy and helpfulness are among the writer's pleasant memories of his year in Copenhagen.

To His Excellency Dr. Maurice Francis Egan, American minister to Denmark, the writer desires to express his gratitude for assistance in securing access to materials. To the Regents of the University of California for aid in making possible the procuring of needed transcripts, grateful acknowledgment is due.

The difficulty of correcting proof and checking up references to manuscript sources when archives are thousands of miles removed from the scene of writing may serve to explain, though

not to excuse, textual errors. The writer is indebted to Professor Hull for generous assistance in reading the final proofs.

The present work, submitted as a thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of California in May, 1915, is the first volume of three which the writer hopes to devote to the history of the Danish West India Islands. The second will follow the fortunes of the colonies down to the end of the Napoleonic Wars, and the third will bring the story down to the present time. In view, however, of the current interest aroused in the islands as a result of their purchase by the United States, a supplementary chapter has been added to this volume, summarizing their more recent history.

Pomona College,
Claremont, California,
April 15, 1917.

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INTRODUCTION

In the month of December, 1916, the Danish Government solemnly transferred the sovereignty of the Danish West India Islands to the Government of the United States, and three months later the United States took possession of the islands of St. Thomas, St. John, and St. Croix. From one point of view, this was the natural development of the United States as a West India power. The island of St. Thomas closely approaches the island of Porto Rico, the first island of the Caribbean Sea of which the United States became possessor. All that will appear upon the map will be the extension of the American Government from Porto Rico a little to the southeast. From a strategical standpoint, the chief value of the Danish Islands to the United States is the possession of the harbor of St. Thomas; from an economic standpoint, it signifies a little further territory producing tropical fruits for the states of the eastern seaboard; from a political standpoint, it means another step in the expansion of the United States. But from the historian's outlook, it means the ending of the colonial power of Denmark, and thereby marks an epoch in history.

The history of the West India Islands has a particular significance to all students of the history of America. It was in the West Indies that took place the most bitter and prolonged struggle in American waters during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is generally pointed out, with a sniff of contempt, that through the lack of prophetic vision among the statesmen of the eighteenth century, it was proposed during the negotiations of the Treaty of Paris, in 1763, that the triumphant English Ministry should not take Canada from France, but one of the French West India Islands, so much more valuable did the commerce of the West Indies appear than the possession of Canada. It was in the West Indies that the most famous naval combats of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were

fought, by the English against the Spanish in the seventeenth century, and by the English against the French in the eighteenth century. The struggle for the possession of the West Indies was, among the European nations of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, both political and economic. To use a phrase of Doctor Westergaard's, those were the days when "sugar was king." The importance of the sugar trade overcame all other considerations, and the European nation that could grow its own sugar cane and import its own sugar in its own ships had an immense commercial advantage over other countries. The peculiar geographical formation of the West India Islands gave every one of the maritime nations of Europe a chance to grow its own sugar. The earliest of these nations in the West Indies, Spain, counted rather on other staples than sugar, and paid more attention to its mainland possessions than to its island possessions. Great Britain, by its settlement of Barbados and St. Christopher and by its conquest of Jamaica, definitely started its career as a planter and importer of sugar, and the French, the Dutch, the Danes, and even the Courlanders followed the example. One of the most interesting experiments in this direction was that of Denmark.

Doctor Waldemar Westergaard, a scholar of Danish extraction, though born in the United States, undertook, some years ago, to study the history of the Danish West India Islands. His knowledge of the Danish language from his childhood caused him to study with great interest certain Danish West India documents of primary importance which had been collected for Mr. H. H. Bancroft of San Francisco, and which now form part of the Bancroft Library, in the possession of the University of California. In his study of these particular documents, Doctor Westergaard discovered that not even in the Danish language was there any reliable history of the Danish West Indies. He therefore resolved to go to Denmark, and there soon found that the Danish historians had neglected the history of their colonial possessions. He spent about a year working among the Danish documents, and was thereby enabled to obtain first-hand information as to the history of the Danish West India Islands, and to write a history of the Danish settle-

ments based principally upon primary authorities. This introduction is not intended to be mere laudation of Doctor Westergaard or an account of his researches, which are described sufficiently well in his bibliography. The originality and merits of his book can be seen by the most superficial reader. Still less is this introduction intended to be a review of his book; it will be rather an attempt to set forth the results of Doctor Westergaard's labors as bearing upon the general history of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Students of American colonial history know well enough the importance of the chartered companies, through which was made possible the early English settlement of the Atlantic seaboard of the present United States of America. But these companies which dealt with the mainland settlements only exhibit on a small scale the general principles by which companies were chartered for trade and plantation, not only by the English Government, but by other European countries as well. Some day it may be possible to bring out the likeness and unlikeness between the conditions under which companies were chartered in Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, and Denmark. M. Pierre Bonnassieux, in his *Les Grandes Compagnies de Commerce*, has given the outlines of such a study, and other French writers have dealt with phases of the French East India Company in particular. More interesting, if it could be made accessible from the primary sources, would be the history, and especially the early history, of the Dutch companies. The story of the English companies before 1720 has been written by Mr. William R. Scott, but their later history is scattered about in many different books dealing with India and America. On all of them is light thrown by Doctor Westergaard's elaborate study of the Danish company. In these modern days, an attempt is being made to revive the chartered-company idea in England, and the British North Borneo Company, under Sir Alfred Dent; the British East Africa Company, under Sir William Mackinnon; the British South Africa Company, under Cecil Rhodes; and the British West Africa Company, under Sir George Taubman-Goldie, have all of them been an adaptation of seventeenth-century ideas to nineteenth-century conditions.

There have been two great principles of expansion and settlement of European nations in Asia, Africa, and America. The one, direct conquest and settlement by the governments of European nations, and the other the tapping of the financial resources of different countries through charters granted to companies of merchants who subscribed capital for settlement and trade beyond the seas, under the direct permission or license of their respective governments. Spain and Portugal were the two countries that believed in direct expansion under royal authority. In some ways, the Portuguese experiment is more interesting, especially in regard to trade, than the far larger Spanish development of empire. The Portuguese Government, after the discovery of the direct sea route to India by Vasco da Gama, kept in its own hands as a government the entire trade of Asia. It was the Portuguese king's agents who purchased the cargoes for Portuguese royal ships in India and Ceylon, in China and Japan and Malacca, in Persia and Arabia. These cargoes of Asiatic produce were brought to Lisbon in the king's ships, and the goods were then purchased by individual merchants out of the king's warehouses. It would be possible to dwell at length upon the direct action of the Spanish and Portuguese Governments in the work of expansion, settlement, and trade in Asia, Africa, and America, but the illustration of the Portuguese Government's control of the Asiatic trade will serve to point out the chief characteristics of government direction. Other countries, notably Great Britain and the Protestant Netherlands in the sixteenth century, and France and Denmark in the seventeenth century, did not, for the most part, work through direct governmental agency, but through chartered companies. The relation between these chartered companies and the governments of their respective countries is a matter of great interest, and much new light is thrown upon it by Doctor Westergaard's very careful presentation of the relation between the Danish West India Company and the Danish Government.

It so happened that Danish expansion into the West Indies took place at the time when the government of Denmark-Norway was entirely in the hands of the Crown. The Revolution of 1660 had put an end to any body of representatives in a

legislature, and the Crown took entire charge of all matters of administration. In Denmark, therefore, there was none of that interference on the part of the legislature which marks the history, in particular, of the English East India Company, which never quite knew, in the seventeenth century, whether it was under the Crown or under Parliament, while it knew very well in the eighteenth century that it must expect the interference of Parliament whenever an opportunity offered. The Danish Crown, therefore, played a considerable part in the history of the Danish Company, even more than that of the French Crown in the history of the various French companies. In France, as in the Protestant Netherlands, the main reliance of the respective chartered companies was upon the various mercantile corporations, or rather organizations of the business interests of France; while in England it was the individual merchants that rallied together to form the first holders of stock in the great plantation and commercial companies.

A point to be noticed is that the Danish Company was, at the same time, a plantation and a trading company. In the minds of the expansionists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there was no great distinction made between trade and plantation, and all students of English history will remember the important functions of the Board of Trade and Plantations, whose administrative powers extended over the varied interests of English colonial expansion. Doctor Westergaard has clearly distinguished between plantation and trade, and has shown how different were the problems presented by each of them.

The staple product of the Danish West India plantations, as of the plantations in all the other islands, was sugar. Doctor Westergaard explains at length the character of the sugar plantations, the working of the manufacture of sugar, and the intensive cultivation of the sugar cane followed by the inevitable exhaustion of the soil. But the chief problem of the sugar planters was labor. At first, the Danish Company tried to make use of the dregs of the white population of Copenhagen. But these first Danish immigrants died off like flies. They were unable to withstand labor in the Tropics. This had also been discovered by the English in the seventeenth century, and,

indeed, by all European planters in the West Indies. The natives of the islands could not work, and the labor problem, therefore, produced the negro slave trade. This meant the establishment by Denmark, as well as by the other countries owning plantations, of barracoons, defended by forts, on the west coast of Africa, where negro slaves could be collected for transport to the West Indies. Very carefully has Doctor Westergaard described these establishments, and shown their importance to the prosperity of the Islands. Indeed, a careful study of his book and of his appendixes will show what some may think a disproportionate amount of space devoted to the slave trade. On the other hand, it must be borne in mind that the negro slave trade was one of the most important phases of commerce in the eighteenth century, and that the wise stockholder in a West India trading and plantation company would naturally endeavor to have the company import slaves for its own and the planters' use in company ships rather than to buy them at a big profit to slave traders of other countries.

Denmark is a very small country compared to Spain, France, and Great Britain, and yet shows in the history of her West India Islands, it is possible to say, many illustrations of the mistakes that ruined the more extensive experiments of other nations. This is not the proper place to describe Doctor Westergaard's treatment of individuals, although he has made quite a picture gallery of governors, factors, captains, chaplains, statesmen, and politicians. To some readers, his personal description of individuals will appeal more than any other feature, but to others the larger economic and political questions involved will seem of greater interest. One episode in particular might be here mentioned, the story of the Brandenburg Company. The Great Elector of Brandenburg is a figure to conjure with; from him started the larger growth of the House of Hohenzollern and its development into King of Prussia and German Emperor. Those who read the past in the light of the present have sometimes wondered that neither Brandenburg nor Prussia had its part in the great movement of colonial expansion. Close students of Hohenzollern history know that Frederick the Great of Prussia deliberately resolved not to make his state into a naval

or a colonial power, but comparatively few know that the attempt was made earlier, not in the direct fashion of sovereignty, but through an arrangement with the King of Denmark, in the West Indies. It seems curious, at the present time, to think of the Hohenzollern Prince, and one as famous as the Great Elector, making arrangements with Denmark for a West India sugar experiment. The story of the Brandenburgers has been dealt with at considerable length by Doctor Westergaard, and doubtless, to some readers, this will prove the most interesting new fact brought to their attention. We have to remember that Brandenburg was a poor country in the seventeenth century, and that it had not the capital or the means to develop a colonial power. We must remember also that it had no sea power, while Denmark-Norway was one of the great sea powers, on account of its extended coast line, its geographical position, and the efficiency of its sailors.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Danish West Indies passed through various stages of prosperity and failure, and were at times profitable to the Danish Crown and to the Danish people, and at other times a drain upon their resources. But the time at last came, in the nineteenth century, when there was no more profit to be made out of cane sugar, and the Danish Islands definitely declined. The abolition of the negro slave trade, the development of beet sugar, the building up of larger political and economic units, all played their part in decreasing the value of the Danish West Indies either to Denmark or to the inhabitants themselves. The same depression from the same causes was to be seen in the West India possessions of other European countries. Ever since the abolition of negro slavery, the English West Indies have been profitless. But for pride, the Danes might have easily abandoned their West India possessions many years ago. But pride in their past is pretty strong in small nationalities that have once been powers in the world. Denmark, after losing Norway in 1814, and Schleswig-Holstein in 1864, became a very small nation indeed, and the Danish West Indies became rather a burden than anything else. Only one nation in the world desired the possession of the Danish West Indies, and that not for economic

reasons. I think that it can be asserted that neither Great Britain nor France would have taken them as a gift, but the United States of America has, for more than a half century, desired the harbor of St. Thomas for strategic reasons. Porto Rico, acquired after the Spanish-American War in 1898, had no naval base, and when the Panama Canal was finally undertaken and then built, it became worth while for the United States to look again towards the acquisition of St. Thomas. The only argument against the cession of the Islands was historic pride, and in these days of European crisis, historic pride could not stand further against actual need. So the Danes made up their minds to forget that they had been a West India power, and to the great delight of the inhabitants of the Islands, who, as Doctor Westergaard points out, are generally not Danes, and to sell their West India possessions to the United States of America. It might be imagined that some patriotic Danes would feel deeply the loss of the Islands as signifying the passing of an historic relic of the Danish past, but the neglect which the Danish people have shown for the history of their West Indies, as shown in Doctor Westergaard's statement that no Danish scholar has written the history of the Islands, and that even the most valuable primary authorities have been utterly neglected, shows that the feeling of historic pride has not gone very deep among Danish scholars. At any rate, it should be noted as an interesting fact, that the first history of the Danish West Indies, written from primary sources, should be the work of the son of a Danish family which immigrated to North Dakota, and that he should have received his historical training at the University of California.

H. Morse Stephens.

THE DANISH WEST INDIES

THE DANISH WEST INDIES UNDER COMPANY RULE

(1671–1754)

INTRODUCTION: GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL

If Belgium has been described, and not inaccurately, as "the cockpit of Europe," the West Indies may be regarded as "the cockpit" of sea power. The islands and mainland of the Caribbean and Gulf regions have been among the prizes for which European states have contended in practically every war of consequence that has been fought during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Just why Spaniards, Frenchmen and Englishmen, Dutchmen and Danes, Swedes and Brandenburgers, and even Knights of Malta and Courlanders, should all at one time or another have directed their energies to West Indian commerce and commercial exploitation is a question that very few, beyond a limited number of specialists, are able intelligently to answer. The heterogeneous character of the West Indian political map of to-day has behind it an interesting story, and one thoroughly worth studying, for those who wish to grasp understandingly the reasons for European interest in America before Spain lost her various American colonies on the mainland. So far as the immediate effects upon Europe were concerned, the beating back of the Spanish frontier in the Caribbean regions by Spain's commercial rivals was far more important at the time than the distant frontier struggles of Spaniards, Frenchmen, and Englishmen on the mainland of America.

The present study is an attempt to separate from the tangled skein of West Indian history the single small thread that concerns the early efforts of Denmark-Norway to establish itself in those distant regions. It is an attempt to explain the strange

fascination that drew the blonde and hardy blue-eyed traders and sailors from the cold Baltic shores to distant tropical regions where the bounties of Nature—it must often have seemed—only served to lure the newcomer on to sickness and death.

Denmark possesses three small islands in the West Indies; St. Thomas, St. John, and St. Croix. With the exception of a few months in 1801 and the period 1807–1815, when England seized them to prevent their being of use to Napoleon, with whom Denmark was to all intents and purposes allied, they have since remained continuously under Danish rule. St. Thomas was first permanently settled by Danes in 1672; St. John, although claimed as early as 1683, was not actually settled until 1716–1717; St. Croix was purchased from France in 1733, and settled by colonists from the other two islands early in 1735. Spasmodic attempts at occupation had taken place before by the Dutch and English on St. Thomas, and by French, Knights of Malta, and miscellaneous rovers on St. Croix.

The total area of the three islands is but a trifle over one hundred and thirty-two square miles, or about three and a half townships. The acreage of St. Thomas is 18,080; of St. John, 12,780.8, and of St. Croix, 53,913.6.[1] At its greatest length, St. Thomas extends about thirteen and three-fourths miles (22 km.), its breadth at the town of Charlotte Amalia is but one and one-half miles (2.3 km.), and its greatest width three and three-fourths miles (6 km.). The two northern islands form part of the Virgin island group, and all three belong to the group still frequently designated as the Leeward Islands.[2] Together they form part of the northwestern extremity of that "bow of Ulysses" constituting the Lesser Antilles, stretching from Porto Rico to the east and then southward in a mighty sweep of seven hundred miles, ending at Trinidad off the South American mainland. With the Greater Antilles and the mainland, they enclose

[1] Eggers (*St. Croix's Flora*, p. 33), gives 51,861 acres for St. Croix. The figures quoted are taken from *The National Geographic Magazine* for July, 1916, p. 89.

[2] The Leeward Islands include the Virgin Islands, St. Christopher (St. Kitts), St. Eustatius, Antigua, Montserrat, Guadaloupe, Martinique, and their various dependencies.

the Caribbean Sea, which is separated from the Gulf of Mexico by Cuba and the peninsula of Yucatan.

The spectator who stands in clear weather above Botany Bay in the west end of St. Thomas and looks westward beyond the little islands of Culebra and Vieques or Crab may plainly see Porto Rico. From the hills that command St. Thomas harbor, the observer may discern St. Croix on the southern horizon thirty-five miles away. St. John, near neighbor to St. Thomas and equally mountainous, is less than three miles from the eastern end of that island. The trip from Smith's Bay, St. Thomas, to Crux Bay, St. John, is but a matter of an hour by rowboat or sail. The British Virgin Islands lie immediately to the eastward, the nearest of them, Tortola, being but twenty minutes distant by rowboat from St. John. Like the rest of the entire archipelago, these islands are of volcanic origin, and subject to frequent earthquakes,[3] which are however rarely destructive. The two islands, St. Thomas and St. John, rise out of the same plateau. Between them and St. Croix the Caribbean Sea deepens to 15,000 feet. Sail-boats plying between St. Thomas and St. Croix must be extremely cautious during the summer months, in the so-called hurricane season. The islands lie directly in the track of the tradewinds that blow down from southwestern Europe and Madeira. This was the reason why they were among the first lands to be sighted by Columbus on his initial voyage westward.

The Spaniards devoted their attention to the larger islands, and, naturally enough, with the increasing importance of the Spanish trade, the lesser islands became desirable outposts for those nations whose traders were all, by lawful means or without, to gain a share in that trade. Of such islands few had more natural advantages than St. Thomas. Its harbor afforded protection to ships in all but the severest storms, its beaches were admirably suited to the careening and overhauling of sailing vessels,[4] and it was easily fortified and defended.

[3] During a period of five and one-half years, Dr. Hornbech noted not less than thirty-three quakes, none of them violent (Bergsöe, *Den danske Stats Statistik*, IV, 579).

[4] See *Grigri* or *Gregerie* on map facing p. 8, just west of harbor.

Besides the harbor, St. Thomas has along its coast line numerous smaller indentations, usually referred to on the islands as "bays," although many are scarcely more than landing places. It is the existence of such bays in this and in many other West Indian islands that has made it practically impossible in the past for officials to put an end to smuggling. Christian Martfeldt, a Danish economist who visited the islands about 1765, listed and described forty-five such "bays" in St. Thomas, and thirty-one in St. John. It is worthy of note that he considered Coral (*Craal*) bay in St. John as not only a better harbor than the one in St. Thomas, but the best in the entire West Indies. It is in fact about twice as deep, and can hold about twice as many vessels.[5] But St. Thomas harbor has always been quite large enough to accommodate such shipping as came to it; hence the harbor of St. John, with perhaps greater natural advantages, has been practically ignored in favor of that of St. Thomas, which after all was first settled and lay closer to Porto Rico.

Ships sailing for the West Indies steered for the islands off the west African coast, whence they were swept on their way southwestward by the tradewinds. The journey usually occupied about seven or eight weeks, although under particularly favorable circumstances it might be made in four. On the return trip the vessel steered north and west of its outward course, passing as a rule about two hundred miles to the east of the Bermudas. The usual procedure for a ship from Copenhagen was to leave in September or October for St. Thomas, remain there until the

[5] "In it [Coral Bay] 400 to 500 vessels large and small can ride at anchor. It has various suitable landing places for the plantations lying round about, separated from each other by out-jutting points which form the said bays. Beside the 6 English families mentioned in the [appended] table there are 16 others, [which he names], from which one may perceive its great extent. It is, besides, provided with a beautiful hurricane 'hole' on the east (north?) side, where 40 to 50 vessels and more may lie safe against storms and so close in to the shore that one may walk ashore on a board, not to mention those that can lie in the 'stream.' In this hurricane hole . . . a number of careening places could [easily] be constructed . . . where vessels could conveniently be careened." Martfeldt, *Samlinger* . . . Vol. III. *Cf.* Bryan Edwards, *History of the British Colonies in the West Indies*, I, 459: "St. John is of importance as having the best harbor of any island to the leeward of Antigua."

winter's sugar cane crop had been harvested, boiled down and put into casks, and then in April or May to sail for home with a completed cargo.

Almost from the first, the chief product of the islands has been sugar, although tobacco and cotton have played an important part in the economy of the islands at certain periods. Their prosperity as plantation colonies has always been peculiarly dependent upon the rainfall. St. Thomas in particular has ever been subject to severe and protracted droughts, and has not infrequently suffered from torrential downpours. "We have had no rain for six months, and the cane is drying up in the fields," is a plaint frequently found in the reports of governors. Nevertheless, St. Thomas and St. John are the most fertile of the Virgin Islands.

The rains are on the whole fairly evenly distributed through the seasons, though the period from the beginning of May till the close of November is more subject to showers than the winter months. The showers are usually local and of short duration; hence it frequently happens that one plantation may have plenty of rain while its neighbor suffers from drought.[6] Dr. Hornbech's carefully kept meteorological journal shows an average annual precipitation for St. Thomas of 43+ inches for the decade, 1828–1838. On St. Croix, Major Lang made painstaking observations at the plantation Eliza's Retreat, situated four hundred feet above sea level and just east of Christiansted, covering the period 1838 to 1861, and he found the annual rainfall there to be but thirty-seven and six-tenths inches. Egger's calculations for the whole of St. Croix for the years 1852 to 1873 give an average downpour of forty-four and forty-eight one hundredths inches, indicating a fairly uniform rainfall on the smaller islands.[7]

The species of calamity that strikes deepest terror in the heart of the West Indian is the hurricane, and St. Thomas is

[6] In Bergsöe (IV, 571 *et seq.*) is given a thorough discussion of climatic conditions on the Danish islands based in part upon the observations of Dr. Hornbech and Prof. Pedersen. See also Baron Eggers, *St. Croix's Flora*, pp. 41 *et seq.*

[7] Eggers, p. 46, quotes A. S. Oersted's estimate for the precipitation in the southern part of Jamaica as forty-six inches.

one of those islands that has suffered most from hurricanes. The custom that long prevailed on the Danish islands, of setting aside two days for prayer, one on June 25 and the other on October 25, at the beginning and end of the "hurricane season," reflects the popular fear of these storms. They are not limited altogether to these summer months, for according to an authority whose work is dated 1853, one hundred and twenty-eight destructive hurricanes have visited the West Indies during the past three hundred and fifty-eight years, and of these, eleven occurred in July, forty in August, twenty-eight in September, and the remaining forty-nine during the other months.[8]

Besides being dangerous to human life on land and sea, they may when violent, pull the roofs off the houses, uproot trees, cast vessels in the harbors high up on the beach, and completely demolish the growing crops. On August 31, 1772, St. Croix was visited by a hurricane which was described in the local newspaper[9] as the "most dreadful Hurricane known in the memory of man." It began about nightfall and "blew like great guns, for about six hours, save for half an hour's intermission." The shipping in the harbor was driven ashore, houses everywhere were shattered, "the whole frame of nature seemed unhinged and tottering to its fall . . . terrifying even the just, for who could stand undisturbed amid the ruins of a falling world. . . . A few such events would ruin us in temporals, but help us in spirituals, and make us fit for the Kingdom of Heaven; for the Turk, the Jew, the Atheist, the Protestant, and Papist would join in unanimous prayer to appease the Lord of Hurricanes."

This catastrophe, which cost the lives of seven whites and nine negroes, was so eloquently described in a letter written by a young counting house clerk on the island, Alexander Hamilton, to his father, that attention was attracted to his ability and he was sent to King's College, New York, to complete his education. The letter[10] ran as follows:

[8] Bergsöe, IV, 579, note.

[9] *Royal Danish American Gazette* (St. Croix), Sept. 9, 1772.

[10] *Ibid.*, Oct. 3, 1772. Mrs. Gertrude Atherton in *A few of Hamilton's letters* . . . (New York, 1903), pp. 261 *et seq.*, quotes this letter in full.

St. Croix, September 6, 1772.

Honored Sir,

I take up my pen, just to give you an imperfect account of one of the most dreadful hurricanes that memory or any records whatever can trace, which happened here on the 31st ultimo at night.

It began about dusk, at north, and raged very violently till ten o'clock.—Then ensued a sudden and unexpected interval, which lasted about an hour. Meanwhile the wind was shifting round to the south west point, from whence it returned with redoubled fury and continued till nearly three in the morning. Good God! what horror and destruction—it is impossible for me to describe—or you to form any idea of it. It seemed as if a total dissolution of nature was taking place. The roaring of the sea and wind—fiery meteors flying about in the air—the prodigious glare of almost perpetual lightning—the crash of falling houses—and the earpiercing shrieks of the distressed, were sufficient to strike astonishment into Angels. A great part of the buildings throughout the island are levelled to the ground—almost all the rest very much shattered—several persons killed and numbers utterly ruined—whole families roaming about the streets, unknowing where to find a place of shelter—the sick exposed to the keenness of water and air—without a bed to lie upon—or a dry covering to their bodies—and our harbors entirely bare. In a word, misery, in its most hideous shapes, spread over the whole face of the country.—A strong smell of gunpowder added somewhat to the terrors of the night; and it was observed that the rain was exceedingly salt. Indeed the water is so brackish and full of sulphur that there is hardly any drinking it. . . . Our General has issued several very salutary and humane regulations, and both in his public and private measures, has shown himself *the Man.*

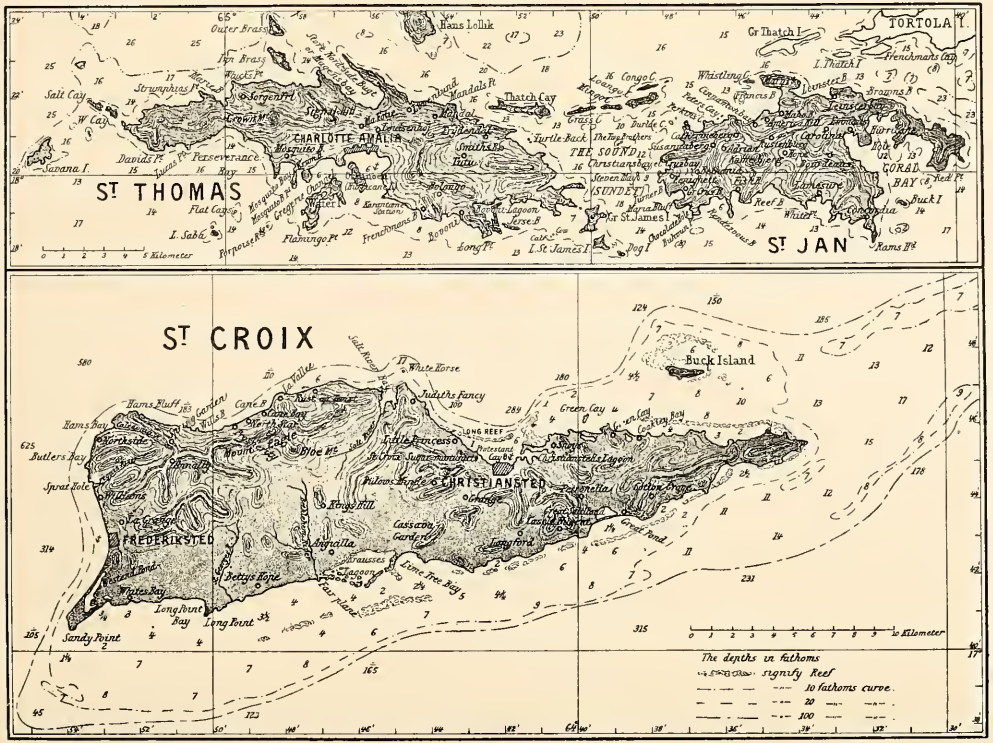
Notwithstanding these occasional stormy visitations, the islands are endowed with varied and interesting plant resources. Along the coast line, where the land has not been cleared, is a thick belt of well-nigh impenetrable bush and trees of which the manchilla tree, the mangrove and the cocoanut palm are among the most striking. The cultivated region is especially adapted to the growing of sugar cane, although the hilly eastern third of St. Croix has had in times past a considerable acreage devoted to cotton. The forest region on St. Croix lies mainly in the eastern third where croton brush covers nearly all of the mountains except an occasional patch suitable for cotton culture, and

the belt on the north side of the ridge west of Salt River, where the most characteristic growth is the eriodendron, or silk cotton tree. On St. Thomas the croton and eriodendron are found chiefly on the southern slopes of the ridge.[11] The northern slopes of St. Thomas and St. John are reputed to be better suited to plantation purposes than the southern. The former island, practically a submerged fragment of mountain ridge, varies in elevation from about one thousand two hundred and fifty feet (380 meters) near the west to about one hundred and fifty to two hundred and fifty feet (45 to 75 meters) at its broader eastern extremity. Settlers seeking plantation ground had first to find a piece of grassland, if possible, or ground not too thickly covered with bush or forest. Some fustic, pockwood, or mahogany was not objectionable, for the dyewood often made a profitable ballast for a sugar and tobacco cargo, while cabinet and building woods found a ready market in the older English settlements to windward. Despite the fact that St. Thomas and St. John were but poorly adapted to plantation purposes as compared with St. Croix, which was the last island occupied by the Danes, St. Thomas had acquired a prosperous planting population before the close of the war of the Spanish Succession in 1713, and had one hundred and sixty-six plantations by the time St. Croix was purchased (1733); while St. John, the permanent occupation of which began in the latter part of 1716, had one hundred and three plantations surveyed or assigned and nearly three-fourths of them under cultivation at the same date.[12]

The severest drawback, especially when the colony was new, was the inevitable fever, probably mainly malarial. The white inhabitants, governors, preachers, planters, seemed helpless when the fever was rife; and epidemics of smallpox frequently carried off great numbers of slaves. Newly arrived settlers, and particularly recently imported soldiers, of whose habitual drunkenness the governors constantly complained, were par-

[11] Eggers, pp. 51 ff.; Börgesen (Dansk Vestindien), pp. 601 ff.; Börgesen og Paulsen, *Om Vegetationen paa de dansk-vestindiske Öer*, pp. 69 ff.

[12] *Land-Lister for St. Thomas og St. Croix.* The usual size of a plantation was 3000 x 2000 feet.



MAP OF THE DANISH WEST INDIAN ISLANDS

[*Facing page 8*]

ticularly liable to attacks of fever, which carried off many of them. It is quite likely that the hookworm took its toll of victims.

A brief résumé of that European overseas expansion in which Denmark-Norway played a small but rather interesting part, is necessary to the understanding of how that state came to be a colonizing power at all. The two great regions which became subject to European commercial and colonial expansion as a result of the age of discovery were, broadly speaking, America and the coasts of southern Asia with those East Indian islands lying to the southeast beyond the Straits of Malacca. To the first of these regions, excepting Brazil, the Spaniards claimed exclusive title, while the Portuguese laid claim to Brazil and to those East Indian localities to which their explorers had first discovered the sea route, and which were for a time to make Lisbon the commercial center of Europe. Of the two regions, the Far East offered at first far better opportunities for trade. The Portuguese merchants found there peoples of a relatively high degree of civilization, who produced a surplus of goods beyond their needs. The Spaniards on the other hand found a nearly virgin land peopled by savages who for the most part had only the most rudimentary ideas of trade. Until these new-found lands could be made to open their store of mineral and agricultural treasure, they would seem to be merely an obstacle that blocked the way to the real India.

But colonization was promptly begun after the discovery, and by 1580, when Philip II of Spain became king also of Portugal, the Spaniards had made large settlements in the New World. The wealth of Peruvian and Mexican mines had begun to flow to Spain, and the news of that wealth to Spain's neighbors in Europe. The Reformation had divided Europe into two armed camps. Religious feeling intensified political and commercial rivalries. Protestant England under Elizabeth was ready to contest with Catholic Spain the supremacy of the sea; while the seven northern provinces of the Low Countries, which in 1579 had formed the Union of Utrecht and two years later had proclaimed their independence from Spain, were ready to assist in

breaking that commercial monopoly in East and West which was now made doubly dangerous through the union of Spain and Portugal. The Dutch continued, though with increasing difficulty, to carry Far Eastern goods from Lisbon to the ports of northern Europe. When, however, in 1595 Philip II caused the seizure of four or five hundred Holland and Zeeland ships then lying in Spanish and Portuguese harbors, it was clear to the Dutch that a readjustment of their commercial methods must take place before they could hope for good times. Jan van Linschoten had already published some of those geographical and trade secrets long jealously guarded by the Portuguese, and on April 2, 1595, ten rich Amsterdam merchants sent out a fleet to the East Indies under Cornelis Houtman. Not until July, 1597, did Houtman return to Amsterdam with three of his four ships and only a third of his men, and with a small cargo for his pains. The enterprise cost more than it yielded, but it showed that with good fortune larger profits might be expected.

The entering wedge had been driven into the Portuguese monopoly. Houtman's voyage was followed by the organization of other and competing Dutch companies, which were finally on March 29, 1602, merged into one great organization, the Dutch East India Company. Meantime Queen Elizabeth had followed up the English victory over the Invincible Armada in 1588, when the hollowness of the Spanish naval prestige had been decisively demonstrated, by sending an expedition under Captains Raymond and Lancaster in 1591 around the Cape of Good Hope to Cape Comorin, Ceylon and the Malay Peninsula. On December 31, 1600, the Queen granted a charter to "The Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading to the East Indies," otherwise known as the London East India Company.[13] The organization of these two companies, English and Dutch, was followed by that of French, Danish, and Swedish companies, and marked the beginning of the end of Portuguese monopoly in East Indian regions.[14]

[13] This is not to be confused with the English East India Company incorporated in 1698 and amalgamated with the above company in 1709. C. P. Lucas, *The Mediterranean and Eastern Colonies*, p. 189, note.

[14] A good working list of commercial companies organized in Europe from

In the West similar attempts were made to break the hold of Spain on the New World. Even before the destruction of the Armada, Sir Walter Ralegh had attempted the colonization of Newfoundland and Virginia. Not until the reign of Elizabeth's successor did the English found a permanent settlement, when the English Virginia Company sent out an expedition which, in spite of Spanish protests, settled on the James River. These successes emboldened the rivals of Spain and Portugal in East and West to fresh activities. The Dutch, encouraged by the success of their early expeditions, first established factories at Bantam, Amboyna, and other places, and in 1619 proceeded to the conquest of the province of Jacatra in Java. As early as 1612 they had begun the occupation of Ceylon (at Trinkomalee), though they did not finally drive the Portuguese from the island until 1658.[15] By 1641 they had gained control of the Straits of Malacca and had become supreme in the Malay seas.[16] The English had established their first settlement in India in 1611, and organized the Presidency of Madras in 1639. Meanwhile the Danes, through their East India Company, organized in 1616, had founded one factory at Tranquebar in southern India in 1618, and others near the mouth of the Ganges, at Pipley and Balasor shortly thereafter, while Danish ships navigated as far as the Spice Islands in search of cargoes.[17]

That part of the western world the settlement of which was calculated to affect Spanish trade monopoly most vitally was the West Indian archipelago. The Spanish treasure fleets which sailed from Porto Bello and Vera Cruz were obliged to pass some of these islands in crossing the Caribbean Sea or the Gulf of Mexico. The occupation of these islands was one of the surest means by which Spain's enemies could gratify their cupidity, and it gave them a base for other activities of a more strictly commercial nature. The Bermudas, situated near the route

1554 to 1698 is given by E. P. Cheyney in *European Background of American History*, 137–139.

[15] Lucas, *The Mediterranean and Eastern Colonies*, 102.

[16] Keller, *Colonization*, 416.

[17] See Kay Larsen, *De dansk-ostindiske Koloniers Historie* (Köbenhavn, 1908), for a detailed account of Danish activities in the East Indies. The factory at Pipley was established in 1625.

used for the return trip to Europe from the Spanish Main and the islands, were settled by the English in 1609–1616.[18] The first footholds gained by the English in the West Indies themselves were in Barbados, just east of the Windward Islands, and in St. Christopher (or St. Kitts) in the Leeward group. These two islands became centers of English influence and settlement in the West Indies. From St. Kitts, which was occupied jointly by French and English in 1625, English settlers went in 1628 to Nevis and Barbuda, and in 1632 to Antigua and Montserrat, all of them islands belonging to the Leeward group. The Dutch took joint possession of St. Croix with the English in 1625, and seven years later stationed themselves in St. Eustatius, a tiny island some half score miles to the northwest of St. Kitts, and in Tobago, near Trinidad. Pushing down closer to the Spanish Main and nearer to the isthmus of Panama, they occupied the island of Curaçao, lying near the entrance to the gulf of Venezuela, in 1634. Saba, an islet near St. Eustatius, was occupied in 1640.[19]

The outlook for profitable trade in the West Indies had led the Dutch to organize in 1621 a West India company which was to become an important factor in the struggle of the Dutch state with Spain. The next nation to found a West India company was the French, which, under the encouragement of Richelieu, formed in 1626 the Company of St. Christopher.[20] This was reorganized in 1635 under the name of the Company of the Isles of America. In the latter year the company began the settlement of Guadaloupe, while a group of settlers from St. Kitts established themselves at Martinique at about the same time.[21] Tortuga, or la Tortue, a little island off the north coast of Hispaniola (San Domingo) was likewise colonized by Protestant settlers from St. Kitts who in 1640 joined a few Frenchmen who had attempted settlement before but had been disturbed by Spaniards. Some Frenchmen who had been driven from St. Kitts by Spaniards in 1629 had settled on the north coast of

[18] Lucas, II, 7 *et seq.*
[19] *Ibid.*, II, Sec. II, Ch. 1, *passim.*
[20] Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, p. 15.
[21] *Ibid.*, 23, 26, 27.

San Domingo, where they remained a small buccaneering and filibustering colony until the time of Colbert.[22]

During this first half of the seventeenth century, the suggestion for the formation of a West India company came up both in England and Denmark, but without tangible result in either case. English commercial companies were directing their chief attentions in America to the Atlantic and Caribbean mainland,[23] while Denmark, which had already entered the East India field, was forced to neglect that for a considerable period on account of more urgent affairs nearer home. Not until the century was nearly three-fourths past was the latter state able to devote itself seriously to American trade and colonization.

But what was this Danish state, that could thus presume to seek a share of the world's newly opened commerce, that had won a Hapsburg princess for one of its kings, that could venture to send a prince to sue for the hand of Queen Elizabeth, that had furnished an asylum for Bothwell on the death of Mary Stuart and a queen for James VI of Scotland, and that had had a king who had become for a time the recognized leader of Protestant Europe? After the great outburst of activity in the Viking Age, when the Northmen succeeded for a brief period in maintaining a North Sea empire, the Scandinavian lands had passed through a period of strife with north German princes and between local rulers. Out of this welter of conflict arose the Union of Kalmar (1397) with Queen Margaret as the sole monarch of the three kingdoms of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. This union lasted with few interruptions until Sweden broke away under the leadership of Gustav Eriksson (*Gustavus Vasa*) in 1523. During this period of a century and a quarter, a desperate struggle with the Hanseatic League for the control of the Baltic and the North Sea had retarded the development of commerce and sea power in the three kingdoms. Denmark had long been the chief enemy of the League, and had been forced to see Bergen arise as a rival to Copenhagen, although Bergen was located in a land closely united to the Danish crown. Not until

[22] Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, p. 29.

[23] The Guinea Company was formed in 1609.

the reign of King Hans (+1513), was Denmark able to meet the Hanseatic League in battle on an even footing and to curb its privileges in Scandinavian cities. It was King Hans' chief glory that he furnished Denmark with a fleet and made her once more a sea power.[24]

The last ruler to hold the scepter of the three kingdoms, Christian II, succeeded through the help of his uncle, Frederick the Wise of Saxony, in negotiating a marriage with the mighty house of Hapsburg. His queen, Elizabeth (Isabella) of Burgundy, whom he married on August 12, 1514, was a sister of the Archduke Charles, who ascended the imperial throne in 1519 as the Emperor Charles the Fifth. The king continued the fight which he had begun while prince, with Lübeck and the other Hanseatic cities, in his attempt to make Copenhagen a staple city for the Baltic trade. After the suppression of a Swedish uprising (1520) marked by the bloody "massacre of Stockholm," the king called certain Danish and Swedish merchants into a conference at Stockholm with the idea of establishing a great northern commercial company with Copenhagen and Stockholm as the leading centers. It was planned to have smaller distributing centers in Finland and the Netherlands, after the fashion of the Hanseatic League, which it was Christian's design to crush. The king was even intending to send one of his captains, Sören (or Severin) Norby, to Greenland and "India" (*i. e.*, America) in search of a direct passage,[25] but before he could bring his plans to fruition, Gustav Eriksson had led the uprising in Sweden which resulted in the breakup of the Union of Kalmar and the accession of the rebel leader in 1523 as King of Sweden under the title of Gustavus I (*Vasa*). In the general crash Christian lost his throne, and plans for American exploration were not seriously considered until nearly a century later.

Meanwhile the feeling of nationality was gradually developing in Denmark. During the reign of Christian II the humanistic movement had already gained considerable headway. The

[24] *Danmarks Riges Historie* (Köbenhavn, 1897–1907, 6 v.), III (a), 133 (cited hereafter as *D. R. H.*).

[25] *D. R. H.*, III (a), 192, 246.

university of Copenhagen (founded 1479) was reorganized in accordance with the new ideas. The introduction of the printing press into Denmark make possible the rapid spread of new ideas. The printing of the rimed chronicle of the Danish kings, *den danske Rimkrönike*, in 1495,[26] of Saxo's history and the like, stimulated national pride. In his triumphal visit to the Netherlands in July, 1521, the king had come in contact with Dutch culture, had met leading Dutch thinkers and workers, and in conversation with Erasmus of Rotterdam had shown a certain sympathy for Luther.[27] Christian Pedersen, a close personal friend of the king, became a leader in the humanistic movement and an exponent of Lutheranism. A history of Denmark from earliest times to 1474, when Christian I visited Rome, was partly finished by Pedersen, but was not printed until our own time. Its pages show that through this period of readjustment to new conditions, Denmark, or Denmark-Norway, as the state was properly called after Sweden achieved its independence, was becoming conscious of itself. Of this new feeling of solidarity, of national consciousness, the Lutheran reformation was at once a phase and a symbol.

The sixteenth century in Denmark-Norway was nevertheless an age of economic decline. That state had indeed gained complete control of the entrance to the Baltic, but its energies were spent in internal disorders, in feuds between the nobles, and in powerful peasant uprisings. This decline is strikingly shown in a negative way by the fact that the number of Netherlands ships that passed through the Sound increased from five hundred and forty-three in 1528 to two thousand eight hundred and ninety-two in 1563. But as long as Denmark retained control of the Sound it was a power to be reckoned with. In the reign of Frederick II (1559–1588), when Spain and England were preparing for their great naval duel, the Spanish ambassador to Sweden actually suggested to Philip II that he direct an attack against Elsinore and Helsingborg, in order to wrest the Baltic

[26] This was the first printed Danish book, and came from the press of Gotfred of Ghemen, a Dutchman, who established the first printing shop in Denmark. *D. R. H.*, III (a), 224.

[27] *Ibid.*

trade from the English and the Dutch.[28] Denmark's position in the North makes it possible to understand how Frederick II could venture to join the ranks of Queen Elizabeth's suitors, and how James VI of Scotland should be led there to seek his bride.

By the time the young king, Christian IV, came of age,[29] Denmark was recovering from the turbulent fever of the Reformation. Its resources were not strong enough, however, to enable it to take part with the Dutch and the English in breaking the monopoly of the Portuguese and Spanish in the Far East. Denmark was destined to play but a secondary part in the history of those regions, but the fact that it was able to play a part at all was due very largely to the vigorous policy of Christian IV and his advisers, who knew how to make the most of the growing feeling of nationality in the Danish-Norwegian state. To be sure, the state still lacked in large measure two essentials for successful trade; the right kind of men, and plenty of money. This deficiency Christian IV hoped to supply from the Protestant Netherlands, which in the beginning of his reign, were still engaged in the struggle for their independence from Spain. As early as 1607 he sent a capable envoy, Jonas Charisius, to Amsterdam to encourage Dutchmen, artisans as well as capitalists, to come to Denmark to live.[30] Despite their war with Spain, the Dutch did not flock to Denmark in very great numbers, but enough came to affect profoundly the commercial development of the country, as will presently appear.

The king's keen interest in exploration and the development of trade led to the sending of three expeditions to Greenland in 1605, 1606, and 1607.[31] The first two succeeded in landing on the west coast, but failed to find any trace of the lost colonies,

[28] *D. R. H.*, III (b), 222.

[29] Christian IV was born in 1577, was proclaimed king under a council of regency on the death of his father in 1588, and assumed the government in his own name in 1596.

[30] In 1521, Christian II had given over the little island of Amager near Copenhagen to 184 Dutch families who were brought in to encourage gardening. *D. R. H.*, III (a), 245.

[31] C. C. A. Gosch, *Danish Arctic Expeditions*, I (Hakluyt Soc.).

which was part of their errand. These colonies had been planted in the Viking Age,[32] but Denmark had had no communication with them since the Black Death in the fourteenth century. It was the King's desire to reëstablish the dominion of the Danish-Norwegian crown over these regions. In 1619 the search for the northwest passage to India, which had been proposed in the reign of Christian II, was actually attempted by the famous Jens Munk, whose *Navigationes septentrionales* has become one of the classics of North Atlantic exploration. Jens Munk had been suggested as captain of that fleet which the newly organized Danish East India Company sent out from Copenhagen on November 29, 1618, to sail around the Cape of Good Hope for the East Indies; but he seems to have been unable to come to terms with the company, in the establishment of which he had been interested. Instead he ventured out from the Danish capital on May 9, 1619, with two ships, the *Unicorn* with a crew of forty-eight and the *Lamprey* with sixteen men. After passing through the Hudson Strait, they sailed southwestward over Hudson's Bay, waters that had been crossed so far as is known only by the discoverer Henry Hudson, by Captain Thomas Button in 1612–1613, and possibly by Hawkridge in 1617. They wintered at the mouth of the Churchill River and after fearful sufferings from cold and scurvy, the captain and two other survivors arrived on the Norway coast in the *Unicorn* on September 21, 1620.[33] After so severe a disappointment, the expedition that had been planned for the following year was given up.

The most lasting contribution of Christian IV to overseas commerce was the chartering of the Danish East India Company in 1616. The prime movers, besides Jens Munk, were two Dutchmen, John de Willom of Amsterdam and Herman Rosencrantz of Rotterdam. The fact that the Danish factory at Tranquebar in India was kept alive at all during the early years of the company was due, more than to any other cause, to the skill and perseverance of the second governor, Roland Crappé, a Dutchman by birth, who directed the factory from

[32] Erik the Red discovered and settled Greenland in 985.

[33] C. C. A. Gosch, *Danish Arctic Explorations*, II.

1621 to 1636.[34] In organizing this company the Danes were following closely in the footsteps of the Dutch, whose great company had already scored some conspicuous successes. So long as states did not possess navies strong or numerous enough to patrol distant as well as home waters, the plan employed to secure reasonable safety for trading vessels was for merchants to band themselves together in joint-stock companies under liberal charters from the crown and then send out, when necessary, whole merchant fleets, properly armed, to Muscovy or Turkey, to India or Cathay. These companies became the instruments by which states fought each other openly or by intrigue for the control of the foreign trade of alien lands. The custom of issuing letters of marque and reprisal had become prevalent in the wars of the sixteenth century. Privately owned vessels were thereby permitted to make seizures of enemies' ships. Hence trade by means of single private vessels became exceedingly unsafe.

Danish merchants organized other companies for trade nearer home. A company organized in 1619 secured a monopoly of the trade with Iceland.[35] The salt and wine trade with Spain and France had suffered so severely from captures and lack of capital that the king, again taking his cue from the Dutch, decided to have the trade carried on by a large number of companies with seats to be located in the various cities of the kingdom, that should serve as distributing centers. It was hoped to produce a merchant fleet that would be of service in defence, but the plan failed, and with its failure the whole scheme of governmentally encouraged commercial companies received a serious setback.[36]

It is interesting to note that in this period of commercial activity, in which the king plays a leading part, we hear for the first time of proposals for a Danish West India Company. They come as one might expect, from a Dutchman, in fact from that John de Willom who had helped in the organization of the East India Company. On January 25, 1625, he received permission

[34] K. Larsen, I, 14 *et seq.*, 170.
[35] *D. R. H.*, IV, 104.
[36] *Ibid.*, 105, 109.

to establish a company which should have for a term of eight years the privilege of trade with the West Indies, Brazil, Virginia, and Guinea.[37] Nothing is known to have come of the venture.

The extent of Christian IV's commercial plans is strikingly illustrated by his foundation of cities. In 1616 he had begun the building of Glückstadt, on the Elbe, with the intention of making it a rival of Hamburg. In 1624 he compelled the inhabitants of Oslo in Norway to move into the newly planned city of Christiania, named in the king's honor, a city that was to become a rival to Bergen, which had lost its Hanseatic privileges in 1559.[38] But just as conditions appeared to favor the rapid development of Danish commerce in new fields, Christian decided to take a hand in settling the religious strife in Germany. The intervention of the king as champion of the German protestant princes and head of the Lower Saxon Circle of the Empire came to an inglorious end (peace of Lübeck, May 22, 1629) and reacted unfavorably upon commercial conditions in the kingdom. The East India Company was reorganized in 1634 and a Greenland company formed in 1636, but the results seem to have been exceedingly meager.[39]

Peace with her neighbors, particularly with Sweden and the Netherlands, was the chief condition on which the prosperity of Denmark-Norway rested. Her selfish policy with regard to the navigation of the Sound drove the Netherlands into an alliance with Sweden (1640) which was to last for fifteen years. At the instance of Axel Oxenstierna, Sweden declared war against Denmark in 1643. As a result of aid extended by Dutch ships and the threat of Dutch intervention in Sweden's behalf, Denmark was forced in 1645 to conclude a peace at Brömsebro in

[37] De Willom had in 1616 with the assistance of Jens Munk organized a company to undertake whale fishing on the Greenland coast; in 1623 he had taken over the royal silk weaving factory in Copenhagen from the king. He is buried in the cemetery of Nicolaj church, Copenhagen. *D. R. H.*, IV, 104. V. Christensen, *Historiske Meddeleser om Kjöbenhavn*, II, 420.

[38] *D. R. H.*, IV, 97, 98.

[39] Two ships were sent out to Greenland in 1636, and mention is made by Thaarup of "an unfortunate voyage undertaken by Commander Kirk Albertz in the year 1639." *Vejledning til det danske monarchies Statistik* (Kjöbenhavn, 1794), II, 365.

which she made important concessions concerning the Sound duties. This was the beginning of Denmark's actual decline as a Baltic power.

Immediately on the accession of Charles X as king of Sweden in 1654 began that series of wars which involved Sweden in struggles with Poland, Brandenburg, the Empire, Russia, and Denmark, and which finally ended, so far as the last named state was concerned, in her humiliation by the peace of Copenhagen (1660). Denmark lost the three southern provinces of the Swedish peninsula, Scania, Halling, and Bleking, as well as her lordship over the Sound. In this strenuous period, when the Danes were fighting for their very existence as a nation, they had no means or energy to devote to commerce with distant lands. During the lull between the two Swedish wars, however, Henry Müller, chief of the Copenhagen customs house and a man of extensive manufacturing and trading interests, sent expeditions to Greenland in 1652 and 1653.[40] In the later year Frederick III granted privileges to certain "participants" to engage in West Indian trade. It was a grant, as the royal letter reads, "to our subjects who have already sailed to the Caribbean islands in the West Indies in a recent year, and who now desire with such other shareholders as may join them to sail again to these islands." The privileges had mainly to do with Sound and harbor dues and had nothing to say of occupation of any territory.[41] The results were at first exceedingly meager. It appears that in 1654, the year that Charles X began his martial career, eleven ship owners from Elsinore ventured to send a single ship to the West Indies.[42]

Though the beginnings were small and early efforts timid, the possibilities of the Guinea-West Indies trade loomed large. It

[40] No further expeditions appear to have visited Greenland until Hans Egede went there to establish his famous mission in 1721. Thaarup, 365. The Dutch had organized a Greenland company as early as 1614, but apparently made no attempt at settlement. Bergsöe, *Den danske Stats Statistik*, IV, 507.

[41] No. 73, *Sjæll. aabne Breve*, Apr. 29, 1662 (*Indlæg*).

[42] Mads Mortensen, Joh. Hansen, Lambert Ebbesen, Jac. Albertsen, Isbrandt V. Holten, Hans Jensen, Joan Wilders, and Hans Hansen, Herm. Voogt, Berendt Willumsen, and Jan Hein. No. 73, *Sjæll. aabne Breve*, Apr. 29, 1662 (*Indlæg*, Mar. 5, 1653).

was not long before the scene of Danish-Swedish rivalry was shifted from the Baltic Sea to the coast of Guinea in Western Africa. Just as the Portuguese monopoly in the East Indies gradually crumbled before the onslaughts of skippers with letters of marque and reprisal, and of companies with royal charters sailing under the Dutch, English, French, or Danish flag, so had the Portuguese monopoly of the African slave trade been broken into, first by the English, of whom John Hawkins stands as a type, and later by Dutch, French, and Courlanders, and in 1614 by the Swedes. Negro slaves were in chief demand among the Spanish planters on the mainland of America and the larger islands, where the use of native labor had threatened the extermination of the Indians and the Caribs. The Swedes had built their Guinea factory in the neighborhood of *Cabo Corso* or Cape Coast, where they seem to have displaced the Portuguese.[43] During the war of 1657–1658 with Denmark, the Swedish factor, one Henry Carloff, turned traitor and went into the Danish service as a privateer, and captured the chief factory, called Carolusberg. Although forced to give up this place, the Danes secured other places near at hand where they built the forts of Fredericksborg and Christiansborg. An African company with headquarters at Glückstadt appears to have been established without delay (1659), though the extent of its activities is not yet known. There was some trading by private Danish adventurers who took cargoes of slaves from Guinea to the Spanish American colonies early in Frederick III's reign.[44]

In the realm of political history the most important event in Frederick's time (1648–1670) was the establishment of the absolute monarchy, probably the most thoroughgoing absolutism that Europe has ever seen. Recent events had demonstrated the necessity for unified and efficient action, and cer-

[43] Lucas, III, 67.

[44] On 17 Nov., 1653, Jens Lassen, a treasury clerk and merchant, with certain associates, petitioned Philip IV for permission to carry on a trade with Spanish America in Guinea slaves. The Spanish ambassador in Copenhagen, the Count of Rebolledo, had favored the grant on the ground that if the king refused, the trade would no doubt still take place. He reported that all the northern lands traded with the Spanish colonies. E. Gigas, *Grev Bernardino de Rebolledo* . . . (Kjöbenhavn, 1883), pp. 181, 377.

tainly it is difficult to imagine a more "efficient" government than an absolute monarchy under a capable despot. Since it was not until this reorganization of government had taken place that the state assumed a leading and consistent part in encouraging commerce and industry, a brief summary of what happened in 1660 will be appropriate.

There was felt a crying need, especially by the peasantry, for a new order, and the nobility was held mainly responsible for existing oppressive conditions. It was in fact chiefly upon the peasants and burghers, assisted to some extent by the clergy, that the king depended in putting through his *coup d'état*. For government by the king and estates, was substituted government by the king alone, who delegated a large part of his work to colleges or boards appointed by himself. Some of these as the Privy Council (*Rigsraadet*), a remnant of the old order, the Council of State (*Statskollegiet*), and the Board of Trade (*Kommerce-kollegiet*), were advisory; others, as the Danish and German chanceries and the treasury board (*Skatkammerkollegiet*), were administrative. The supreme court which had hitherto been filled entirely by the nobility, now came under the Danish chancery. The chancellor became its president, and trained burghers were given seats in it. Besides these institutions, which were modified as conditions changed and circumstances demanded it, special commissions were at one time or another appointed to investigate special subjects; sometimes the king would issue acts or ordinances under his own hand, and sometimes one or another board would prepare an act which would be issued from the royal chamber or cabinet.[45] It was this concentration of power in the royal hands that made possible a concentration of effort in matters of trade. About the time when Danish and Norwegian merchants were beginning to think seriously of securing the establishment of a chartered company for trade with America (*i. e.*, the West Indies), or of making some arrangement with the French who were preparing

[45] *Meddelelser fra Arkivet, 1886–88*, 65 *et seq.* *D. R. H.*, IV, 470 *et seq.* "Cabinet Orders" play an important part during the Guldberg period (1772–1784) when much of the government was carried on through orders made out by advisers and signed by the king.

under Colbert's direction to reorganize their West India Company, that the Board of Trade was established (1668) as a department of the Danish government, with the Dutchman Simon Petkum as its first president.[46]

The question naturally arises, What was the actual situation in Europe and the West Indies with which this new-fledged absolutism would be called upon to cope before it could successfully launch a colonizing and commercial company for New World exploitation? The sudden death of Charles X in 1660 had lessened the immediate danger from the Swedish quarter. The accession of Charles II to the throne of the restored monarchy in England could not but be viewed hopefully in Denmark, which state had all but openly assisted the Netherlands against England in the first Anglo-Dutch war (1652–1654). Denmark's position in the second Anglo-Dutch war (1665–1667) was still more difficult.[47] The Dutch, by virtue of alliances with both powers, were straining every effort to secure the assistance, active or passive, of France and Denmark, while Charles II was laboring to draw Frederick away from the Dutch alliance. Although forced to resist the Dutch, Louis XIV succeeded through a combination of circumstances in thwarting Charles' Danish plans. Frederick III made a show of remaining neutral, but he succeeded in saving the Dutch East India fleet in Bergen harbor from English captors.[48]

Events in Europe reacted on conditions in the West Indies. Jamaica had been seized in 1655 by the Penn-Venables expedition sent to American waters to make reprisals against the Spaniards. In 1660 the English, French, and Caribs signed a peace at Guadaloupe by which the Indians should be allowed undisturbed occupation of the two Leeward Islands of St. Vincent and Dominica, provided they kept the peace elsewhere.[49] During the second Anglo-Dutch war, the French had

[46] *D. R. H.*, IV, 490; *Meddelelser fra Arkivet*, 1886–1888, p. 106.

[47] One of the immediate causes of this war was the rivalry between Dutch and English traders on the Guinea Coast.

[48] Schoolcraft, "Anglo-Danish Relations, 1660–67," in *The English Historical Review*, vol. 25, p. 479.

[49] Lucas, II, 57.

seized the English part of St. Kitts, Antigua and Montserrat in 1667, only to give them back by the treaty of Breda in the same year. The English in their turn had seized Surinam in South America from the Dutch, but returned it in 1674 on the final cession to England of New Amsterdam.

In Europe, the ambitions of Louis XIV were presently to change the general aspect of affairs. The treaties of Breda were followed by the Triple Alliance between England, the Netherlands and Sweden (1668). This alliance Louis immediately set about to break; only by isolating the Netherlands could he hope to carry out his plans on the Continent. He was aided in this by the circumstance that Charles II had scarcely any more liking for the Dutch than Louis, and was quite inclined to lend his aid to any scheme that promised to cripple or destroy the United Netherlands. The secret treaty of Dover by which Charles pledged his aid to Louis in the event of a war with the Dutch was signed June 1, 1670. Under these circumstances an alliance between England and Denmark would weaken the Dutch and hence should add to the joy of France. And so it happened that not later than June 21, 1670, Arthur Capel, first Earl of Essex, left England for Copenhagen as ambassador extraordinary to conclude a treaty of alliance with the new Danish king, Christian V.[50]

Denmark's interest in the West Indies was only secondary, and was based upon the interest aroused in her merchants as a result of recent voyages which will be considered later. What English as well as French diplomacy played upon in Denmark was fear of Sweden and a feeling that the Dutch had long treated them insolently in the Sound disputes and would be "ever ready and resolute in defence of Hamburg, whenever the Danes should have strength enough to attack it;" for Hamburg, as Sir William Temple expressed it, was their "chief ambition abroad, it seems." [51]

In Europe England's wars with the Dutch had materially

[50] *Cal. Dom., 1670* and *Add., 1660–1670*, pp. 165, 378; *Cal. Treas., 1669–1672*, v. 3, pt. 1 (Nov. 10, 1670). The refusal of Essex to strike his flag on entering Danish waters created considerable stir in England.

[51] Sir W. Temple, *Works*, II, 217 (London, 1814, 4 v.).

enhanced her sea power, while in the West Indies her ability to hold Jamaica against Spanish attempts at reconquest had made her a serious rival of France as a West Indian power. If Denmark hoped to secure any lesser islands as footholds from which to carry on trade with Porto Rico or other of the larger Spanish islands, an understanding with England was imperative, for while the French had their buccaneering colonies on San Domingo and Tortuga, and some small Leeward colonies to the north, French ships of war were mainly concentrated near the fertile islands of Guadaloupe and Martinique, the southernmost of the Leeward group.

But although Spain had lost Jamaica, she yet remained the leading colonial power in the West Indies and on the neighboring mainland. The destruction of the Armada in 1588 had lost Spain her naval prestige, and had left her commerce and her colonies all but helpless at the hands of all sorts of searovers,—privateers, buccaneers, pirates, or by whatever name they might be called. These men were gathered from many nations; their common enemy was Spain and their common aim was plunder; while French, English, and Dutch authorities in the West Indies winked at their depredations, when they did not actually encourage them. Not infrequently did the Spaniards send out punitive expeditions that wreaked terrible vengeance for ills previously suffered, by capturing or dispersing many a young colony which ventured to settle in their proximity.

A secret article to the treaty of Vervins arranged between France and Spain in 1598 had expressly provided that the peace should not hold good in regions west of the longitude of the Azores and south of the tropic of Cancer. French and Spanish ships meeting each other beyond these lines, "les lignes de l'enclos des amitiés," might make lawful prize of one another as in time of war.[52] With the Dutch, lawlessness had often enough been possible without a treaty, though they had secured the recognition by the Spaniards of their independence in the Treaty of Münster in 1648. The first state to negotiate a treaty with Spain that would actually prepare the way for order in West Indian regions was England, whose buccaneers and log-

[52] Haring, *Buccaneers in the West Indies*, 48.

wood cutters were threatening to extend the English frontier from Jamaica to the Spanish Main in the logwood district about Campeachy and Honduras Bay.[53]

The time had come for Spain to admit by treaty what was already an established fact; that she no longer held a monopoly over the Caribbean Islands. So while Essex was negotiating in Copenhagen, Sir William Godolphin had been received in Spain, where on April 18, 1670, he secured from Charles II of Spain the Treaty of Madrid, "composing differences, restraining depredations, and establishing peace" in America. For the first time, Spain definitely recognized England's right to possess undisturbed the American islands and colonies which she actually occupied, although the Pacific was to remain, as heretofore, strictly a closed sea.[54] Before the news of the treaty could be published in the English and Spanish colonies, the arch-buccaneer, Henry Morgan, most notorious of his tribe, had led an expedition which had sacked the two isthmian cities of Porto Bello and Panama. The subsequent knighting of Morgan by the king and his appointment as lieutenant-governor of Jamaica were hardly calculated to inspire confidence in England's intentions to bring about peace in Caribbean waters. And yet, as we shall see, an honest attempt was made in that direction in which Sir Henry Morgan figured as the faithful representative of law and order.

Though the treaty was far from instantaneous in its effects, it furnished a basis for mutual relations and strengthened England's position in the West Indies to the extent that she was

[53] An expedition from Jamaica had attacked the Castle of Santa Cruz on the Campeachy coast in February, 1663. Logwood cutting on the coast of Campeachy, Honduras and Yucatan had begun among the English about 1665. Haring, *Buccaneers*, 107, 208.

An interesting episode that forms a connecting link between the Elizabethan struggle with Spain and the English conquest of Jamaica is the Puritan colonization scheme of 1629–1640, when the Providence Company held the islands of Providence (Santa Catalina), Henrietta (San Andreas), and Association (Tortuga) until they were seized by the Spaniards. A detailed account is to be found in A. P. Newton's *The Colonizing Activities of the Early Puritans* (New Haven, 1914).

[54] Haring, *op. cit*, 197.

able actually to bring about peace by "composing differences" and "restraining depredations." Denmark's position could not but be improved by her being an ally of the power that had been able to humble the Dutch sea power and to score a diplomatic victory over his Most Catholic Majesty.

A word remains to be said concerning the position of Denmark with respect to France whose king persisted in treating the states of Europe as pawns on the diplomatic chess board. The immediate aim of Louis XIV, as already indicated, was to check the United Netherlands and if possible wipe them off the board. England had been brought within his schemes by the Treaty of Dover. It remained to detach Sweden from her alliance with the Dutch, after which he would be ready to throw off the cloak of diplomacy and disclose the iron fist. Meantime Colbert, Louis' great minister of finance, was quite willing to make use of Denmark to help destroy Dutch commerce in the Baltic, and to promote that of the French; but he was unwilling to go as far in the matter of reciprocal trade privileges in Danish and French ports as the gentlemen who were engaged in 1668 in organizing the Company of the North.[55] The proposal of these French merchants was considered by the Board of Trade, a body created at this time apparently for the very purpose of giving proper consideration to the French suggestions. But the president of this board was a Dutchman named Simon Petkum, who professed to see small prospects in this French trade. Private Danish traders had already visited the French West Indian islands. An attempt had been made in fact to occupy St. Thomas, and hence a counter proposal of the Board of Trade must have been made with the previous experience in mind and in the hope of increasing this trade. The Board proposed that the Danes send annually to the French colonies of St. Christopher and Martinique such goods as were needed and at a reason-

[55] The Danish ambassador at Paris, Frederick Gabel, had reported that "the French trade was so managed that in time it would center entirely in France and that a foreign state would hardly go into a partnership with it unless it received very considerable advantages [referring to French subsidies]." Gabel's *Relation*, October 5, 1668 (N. S.), and October 19 (quoted in K. Fabricius, "Colbert og Danmark," 9).

able price on condition of Denmark's receiving certain staple rights in France, *e. g.*, in La Rochelle and Nantes.

But Colbert's idea was protection, not reciprocity. He had no desire to encourage the establishment of a Danish West India company that might become an active competitor with the Company of the North, so he turned the negotiations to the subject of Dansborg, the Danish factory on the Malabar coast of India, which he attempted in vain to buy for France. In these futile negotiations the idea of coöperating for the pursuit of West Indian trade was lost sight of, and Danish merchants were left to form their own company.[56]

Of the expeditions which were sent to the West Indies by private Danish adventurers previous to the *coup d'état* of 1660, mention has already been made. It remains to consider those expeditions which took place after the disastrous war with Sweden, and which led eventually to the choice of St. Thomas as the site of Denmark's first West Indian colony. A memorial dated February 15, 1662, and hitherto unpublished, epitomizes the state of Danish trade in the West Indies during the troublous years that had just passed. "We have to thank Your Majesty," runs the memorial, "most graciously and humbly for the privileges [to trade] upon the Caribbean islands, which were granted to us several years ago, although by God's will [57] we suffered great losses on the journeys undertaken during those times, inasmuch as Cromwell and those ruling with him took away from us two ships with cargoes, worth over 32,000 *rdl.* And besides, one of our ships with full cargo and twenty-two persons was swept away from the land by God's weather, by the wind called hurricane, on the 11th day of August, 1657, and never has there been heard of ship or men since; so that we have suffered a very great loss during the two years. Since that time we have been unable to continue our voyages thence, both for the reasons given and because of the dangers due to the present wars. . . . Meantime our former privileges have expired, and we have again undertaken in the Lord's name to have our former skipper,

[56] Knud Fabricius, "Colbert og Danmark . . ." (*Historisk Tidsskrift*, 8 R., IV, Till.).

[57] *Gud bedred disverr.*

Erik Nielsen Schmidt, navigate these islands in the good hope that God Almighty will grant us some share of the good things of the land by way of restitution for our former losses. We pray Your Majesty to renew the grant of our former privileges for another term of years." Hans Nansen, Schmidt, and three others [58] signed their names to the petition which was granted [59] substantially in the form asked, for "the present year" only.

The Hans Nansen who signed this petition appears to have been the son of the wealthy burgher and Iceland merchant of the same name. After attendance in a Copenhagen "Latin school" he had been sent to Danzig in 1652 to learn bookkeeping, and went thereafter on business missions to Prussia, the United Netherlands, and Iceland. In 1655 he was the "winter merchant" of the Iceland-Færö company; in the winters of 1656–1657 he was in Amsterdam learning seamanship and nautical mathematics. In the summer of 1657 he was made merchant in Iceland for the new company; the year following he was in Glückstadt and Hamburg. During the last Swedish war, being unable to return to Copenhagen, he was in business for his associates and himself in Hamburg, Glückstadt and Iceland. He was certainly one of the organizers of the West India Company in 1671, and may be taken as a type of the shrewd, adventurous entrepreneurs of the age of the commercial companies.

The skipper, Erik Nielsen Schmidt, was evidently selected for his knowledge of West Indian waters and conditions. How many previous voyages their "former skipper" may have made, it is impossible to say, but he is certainly found on February 25, 1663, passing through the Sound with a cargo of tobacco, ginger, etc., from the West Indies; [60] he is referred to in a contract dated June 8, 1665, at Copenhagen as royal commandant and governor of the island of St. Thomas.[61] On July 1 he passed Elsinore with

[58] No. 73, *Sjæll. aabne Breve*, April 29, 1662 (*Indlæg*). Find Nielsen, Christoffer Hanse, and Jörgen Hansen Raffn. Schmidt's name appears as Erich Nielsen *Schmit* in the document, and is signed Erich Nielsen *Smit*.

[59] It was granted on April 29, 1662, *udi nærværende Aar*.

[60] *Öresundstoldregnskabet* for 1663.

[61] In *Kirkehist. Saml.*, 5 R. II B., pp. 293 *et seq.* E. V. Lose quotes *in extenso* the contract entered into between Schmidt and Kield Jensen Slagelse, the

a cargo of provisions bound for the West Indies.[62] Early in 1666 (February 15) he sent a small cargo containing three hundred "rolls" of tobacco and one and one-half hhds. of sugar to Copenhagen.[63] Not long thereafter, in the same year, he died at St. Thomas. The Lutheran minister, Kjeld Jensen Slagelse, seems to have succeeded him and to have returned to Denmark with the remaining colonists. The last ship from the West Indies recorded as passing through the Sound before the organization of the Company in 1671, and probably the one by which the St. Thomas colonists came, sailed into Copenhagen harbor on August 30, 1666, under Holger Freder's command. The cargo contained 50,000 lbs. of pockwood, 20,000 lbs. of sugar, and 70,000 lbs. of tobacco,[64] which may partly have been bought on French or English islands.

Such then, in its main features, was that long train of circumstances that had attracted the interest of kings and subjects of Denmark-Norway to the western world, and particularly to those parts adjacent to the Spanish Main. The success of those trading vessels that had returned with fair cargoes from successful ventures in those distant tropical waters had at least served to whet the appetites of Danish-Norwegian merchants and skippers. They began to hope that by following the course laid out by other western European states, notably the Dutch and the English, they, too, might secure some share in that commerce of which Spain was finding it increasingly difficult to keep a monopoly. It remains to explain how Danish merchants were able through a royally chartered commercial company to gain for the state a permanent foothold in those regions.

Lutheran minister who was to accompany him. A copy of the same is to be found in the Bancroft Collection, but the date given is 1655.

[62] *Öresundstoldregnskabet* for 1655.

[63] *Ibid.* for 1666.

[64] *Ibid.* for 1666.

CHAPTER I

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMPANY

By 1671, circumstances were more favorable to the establishment of a Danish West India Company with broad powers and considerable latitude of action than at any previous time. The several expeditions already described gave sufficient encouragement to suggest a more ambitious plan for getting into the field of Caribbean commerce. An unoccupied island with an excellent harbor had been found, the peaceful occupying and retaining of which had become a more likely possibility as a result of recent diplomatic developments in Europe. The newly founded Board of Trade took on a new lease of life after the accession to the throne of the new king, Christian V, in 1670. On September 22 of that year the Board received its first official instructions, and presently it was organized with Frederick Ulrik Gyldenlöve, the illegitimate son of the king, as its president and Jens Juel, a statesman and diplomatist and a brother of the famous admiral, as vice-president. The remaining members included the well-known merchant Hans Nansen, Peter Peterson Lerke, the Danish master of the mint, Andrew Timpf who had held a similar position in Poland, Gabriel Marselis, a reputable Dutch merchant, and as secretary, Melkior Rötlin, formerly employed in Bergen as secretary of the Lübeck office.[1] To these men the king's trusted adviser, Peter Schumacher (created Count Griffenfeld and made Chancellor in 1673) lent his enthusiastic support in all matters pertaining to the encouragement of trade and industry.[2] On November 20, 1670, the second Danish East India Company was organized and given a charter for forty years. On the eleventh day of the following March,

[1] K. Fabricius, *Griffenfeld* (Köbenhavn, 1910), 160, 166. The contemporary spelling of Lerke's name is *Lerche*.

[2] *D. R. H.*, IV, 539.

the Danish West India Company received its charter from the royal hand.[3] In America and the Far East Denmark was planning to enter into commercial competition with her enterprising neighbors.

As directors of the West India Company the king named three of the members ("assessors" or judges) of the Board of Trade, Jens Juel, Peter Lerke, and the burgher, Hans Nansen,[4] the last named on the nomination of Peter Schumacher.

This charter, like the usual seventeenth century commercial company charters, conferred very broad powers upon the company. In describing it, reference will be made by way of comparison with an organization established just the year before, the continuous existence of which from that day to this renders it unique in the annals of chartered companies, namely, the Hudson Bay Company, whose official corporate title was "the governor and company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson Bay." The English had no company exactly corresponding to the Danish company. The Royal African Company, founded in 1672, made Guinea the main scene of its operations, with the British islands in the West Indies the chief market for what soon came to be their principal article of commerce, African slaves. But the Hudson Bay Company was, like the Danish, intended for the exploitation of the New World and offers at its inception, despite the different nature of its sphere of action, some interesting resemblances to its contemporary.

The charter issued by Christian V authorized the Danish West India Company to occupy and take possession of the island of St. Thomas "and also such other islands thereabouts or near the mainland of America as might be uninhabited and

[3] C. P. Lucas, II, 52, III, 67, mistakenly places the incorporation of the company in 1734. For the second East India Company, see Kay Larsen, *De dansk-ostindiske Koloniers Historie* (Köbenhavn, 1907), I, 43.

[4] P. Mariager, *Historisk Efterretning over de Vestindiske og Guineiske Compagnies Etablissementer udi Vestindien og Guinea*, p. 2. This manuscript work by a bookkeeper of the Company is in the Royal Library at Copenhagen and is of prime importance. (Cited hereafter as *Mariager MS.*)

Hans Nansen was also a judge on the Admiralty Board, and later became, as his father had been before him, president of the city of Copenhagen (1688).

suitable for plantations, or if inhabited, then by such people who have no knowledge concerning us." [5] Like the Hudson Bay Company, it was authorized to build forts and lodges and to take proper measures for its own defence in case of attack; it administered justice to all in the Company's service or within its immediate jurisdiction. Direct appeal to the Supreme Court at Copenhagen was permitted by the Danish company; the English government granted the Hudson Bay Company final jurisdiction, merely stipulating that all causes should be judged and local justice carried out by one of the local governors and his council, where such authority was available, "according to the laws of this kingdom." [6]

The Danish king bound himself to issue no "seabriefs" or passports to Danish captains navigating the Danish West Indies and promised the Company the proceeds of all prizes except the usual tenth part which was the perquisite of the admiral of the realm. The Hudson Bay Company was originally empowered to seize the persons of English or any other subjects who sailed into Hudson Bay or were found in the Company's territory without its permission. No such amazing powers were conferred on the Danish company; and in any case, there would have been no opportunity for their exercise. The English company like the Danish had government officials on its board of directors, but the association of government and company was far closer in Denmark than in England because of the absolute, thoroughly centralized administration established by Frederick III and continued by his son Christian V. The internal government of each company was managed by a general assembly, or "general court," as the arrangement was called in the English charter. The Danes were charged with the responsibility of converting the Indians, not a difficult task, as only two or three are to be found in the entire period of the Company's existence.[7] We may judge of the success with which this injunction was carried out by the fact that "John Indian,"

[5] *I. e.*, Indians.

[6] Cawston and Keane, *The Early Chartered Companies* (London, 1896), 292 *et seq.* See *Appendix C* for translation of Danish charter.

[7] *Cf.* Lucas, II, 138.

himself a large fraction of his tribe, finally was punished by the loss of a leg for his various attempts at running away.[8]

Besides the three royally appointed directors, two of whom were nobles, three were to be elected by the shareholders ("participants") from among themselves by a majority vote, those chosen being required to have a minimum of 2,000 "Slettedaler" invested in the Company's stock.[9] A paragraph (¶13) the consequences of which the promoters could not have foreseen was that which provided for the upkeep of the population of the young colony by the promise of as many of the men condemned in the home country to labor in irons or to serve in prison as the company might deem necessary for its plantations, and as many as they might wish of those women whose disorderly lives had brought them into arrest in the "spinning house" and other places. This was not the first time that Europe deliberately planned to empty her jails on American soil nor was it to be the last time, but on St. Thomas as in the English colonies, the authorities soon learned that convicts were not deemed good timber for plantations by the colonial officials. Not like the English company, where the owner of each block of stock worth £100 was entitled to vote, the Danish company gave each shareholder one vote, and only one vote. The minimum size of the shares was one hundred rixdollars. The Company received free use of rooms in the Copenhagen Stock Exchange, and was provided with suitable pack house quarters on "Holmen" near the present site of "Holmens" church. The king, the queen, and Prince George, each susscribed 3,000 *Slettedaler*, while the total amount of this first subscription was 64,300 *sldl.*, which was to be paid in three

[8] Even the negroes did not become the objects of serious missionary effort until the arrival of the Moravian missionaries in 1732, and then the impetus came from circles entirely outside of the official class.

[9] A Slettedaler = 64 Skilling; a rigsdaler (rixdollar) = 96 Skilling = 6 Mark. 1 pesos = 8 reals = 96 granos (or 48 stivers). A rixdollar was about equal to a pesos or piece-of-eight, and to four *kroner* (1 *Kr.* = $0.275) in present day coin. The purchasing value during the Company's career was perhaps two to three times that of the present time in Denmark. On money values, see *D. R. H.*, IV, 103, note; W. Scharling, *Pengenes synkende Værdi* (Köbenhavn, 1869); Arent Berntsen, *Danmark og Norges Frugtbar Herlighed.* (Kjöbenhavn, 1656).

equal parts, the first to be available on June 11, 1671, the last instalment on March 31, 1673.[10] A proposal to require the royal assent to the election of directors by the shareholders was struck out by Peter Schumacher, who was responsible for the arrangement by which two directors instead of six should have the full power to attend to the Company's current business.[11] As a sort of advisory body there was formed a group of those who had invested not less then 1,000 *rdl.*, and who were known as the chief participants.[12] From this group a committee of four was provided for,—two nobles and two burghers, who should have the power to inspect the Company's books at any time, and who audited the bookkeeper's accounts once in each year. The first chief participants appointed were Admiral Kordt Adeler and Frederik Poggenberg.[13] The former was by birth a Norwegian and had distinguished himself in the Venetian navy in the struggle with the Turks.

Such was the constitution of the Danish West India Company whose corporate existence continued, although with a number of changes, for eighty-four years. Under this charter and the "règlement" which accompanied it, preparations for the settlement of St. Thomas were begun in the summer of 1671. On the nomination of Lerke, the directors selected George Iversen as governor of the new colony. The new governor, though a man but thirty-three years of age when he received his appointment, had led a life full of incident and of the sort of experience that served to prepare him for his post.[14] His surname of Dyppel, the modern Dybböl, testifies to a Schleswig origin, although he was himself born in Elsinore, where his father was a baker. Not long after his twelfth year, when his schooling was ended, he was bound to service and sent to the West Indies by one of those privately owned ships referred to above, perhaps by the

[10] *Mariager MS.*, 14, 15.

[11] Fabricius, *Griffenfeld*, 169.

[12] See *Règlement* of March 11, 1671 (C. P. Rothe, *Christian V's Rescripter for Norge . . .* II B.).

[13] *Mariager MS.*, 15.

[14] This account of Governor George (*Jörgen*) Iversen's life is based mainly on the excellent and exhaustive sketch by Fr. Krarup in the *Personalhistorisk Tidsskrift*, II R. 6 B. (Köbenhavn, 1891).

ship that left Elsinore in 1654. It is at any rate certain that he entered the service of an English merchant on St. Christopher (St. Kitts), and that about 1660 he returned to Europe with a Dutch merchant. There he joined a company including three business men from Zeeland, of whom one John Basselaer, was the leader; Iversen participated in the enterprise, holding one-sixth of the capital. He was himself to accompany the ship to the West Indies and to take charge of the trade there, of which he was to enjoy one-half of the profits.

All went on smoothly until 1665, when Iversen returned to Europe and there learned that war had broken out between England and the Netherlands. This information was brought in upon him in a way that was not to be mistaken, and he paid dearly for his instruction. His ship and cargo were seized by an English privateer. The skipper himself went to Copenhagen hoping to obtain restitution through diplomatic channels. Admiral Henry Bjelke procured him an audience with Frederick III. The king not only acceded to Iversen's desire that Charles II of England be petitioned to deliver over to the injured party his share of the damages, estimated at 3,000 *rdl.*, but had Iversen come to him three times to tell him concerning life in the New World and of his personal experiences there. Inasmuch as the Danes appeared to show too much sympathy with the Dutch, and particularly since the failure of the Danes to coöperate with the English fleet in capturing the Dutch East Indiamen in Bergen harbor, Iversen's petition came to nothing. Although he kept up his connections with his Zeeland partners, he appears to have remained in Denmark during the years following. In 1670, the year of the embassy of Essex, he was married "in the house," a distinction which indicates a fairly high social position, and with other evidences, shows him still to have been a man of some means, despite his severe loss.

The newly elected governor invested 1,000 *rdl.* in the West Indian enterprise at the start. He also took charge of fitting out two ships provided by the new king, Christian V, for the use of the Company. About 20,000 *rdl.* were expended in the outfitting. Captain Arent Henriksen, a Dutch skipper, took

the yacht, *The Gilded Crown*, and set sail on August 30, 1671.[15] He was to look over the ground, for it was not entirely certain that the English might not have occupied it. On the failure of the *Ferö* to arrive within the time expected, Captain Henriksen returned to Denmark with ship and cargo, only to find that the Governor had left on February 26,[16] after having been delayed in Bergen since November 20, because of a leaky ship. The passenger list of the *Ferö* makes interesting reading. Besides the crew, which totaled only twelve men, those who had bound themselves to service and engaged themselves as employees of the Company numbered one hundred and sixteen. The remaining sixty-one had been selected, as the charter had permitted, from the convicts in Bremerholm and other places. Several culprits had escaped at Bergen, but were promptly replaced by others equally unpromising.

With this motley throng, to manage, an assemblage that was to form the nucleus of the new colony, Governor Iversen would have abundant opportunity to show of what stuff he was made. After leaving Bergen, and especially on the approach to the warmer latitudes, the toll of death began to be taken in earnest. Eighty-six persons of both sexes died on the journey or had escaped in Bergen. One of the victims was Kjeld Jensen Slagelse, the minister, who had accompanied Erik Schmidt on his voyage in 1665.

The ship, with a cargo valued at 18,172 *sldl.* arrived in St. Thomas harbor on May 25, 1672,[17] just three months after its departure from Bergen. The pioneer band went ashore on the following morning, raised the Danish flag, and took formal possession. They found an island that seemed to them, as the governor expressed it, well suited and large enough for their purposes. No one was there to dispute ownership, the English who had occupied it, having left six or seven weeks earlier, after burning off the roof of the storehouse.[18] The land had to be cleared of bush and forest before it could be planted; pockwood

[15] *Mariager MS.*, 15.
[16] *Mariager MS.* has it February 29 (p. 16).
[17] *Mariager MS.*, 16, 18.
[18] *Ibid.*, 18.

was sufficiently in demand in Denmark to furnish a profitable ballast for returning ships during the earlier years of the colony. The problem of securing cane for the newly cleared patches of plantation ground was solved by the aid of the English, who had recently seized Tortola, a little island just northwest of St. John, from the Dutch. The English officer [19] in charge there generously gave the Danes full permission to use anything they found on the island, and they made no find more precious than the shoots of sugar cane.

The new masters had scarcely begun settlement, before colonists of various sorts began to seep in. The greater number of them belonged to the Dutch nation, and were seeking the protection of a state that they supposed to be on friendly terms with the English, who were harrying the Dutch wherever they dared. Some of these, as John von Beverhoudt, became planters of distinction and even founded influential families; others, like Carl Baggaert, an absconder from Middelburg, became trouble makers who soured the life of the governor and those in authority with him. Although French, Germans, English, and Jews were among these early settlers, Dutch became the prevailing language from the beginning.

To keep such a variously confused assemblage in reasonable restraint while the necessary pioneering work was being done, was the new governor's task. That Iversen should succeed in laying the foundation of a civil government out of the crude materials that he had at hand was in itself a creditable performance, and something for which his masters had reason to be grateful. But in putting through this pioneer work one is not surprised to find that he gained for himself a reputation for severity that made the directors declare that Governor Iversen's brutal management "has given the Company such a bad reputation among the common people in Denmark that they are of the opinion that if they should serve in the West Indies they would be worse off than if they had served in Barbary." There was indeed considerable ground for such a belief, and the fault did not all lie with Iversen's government.

[19] Spoken of by Krarup (*Jörgen Iversen*, 28) as Burd.

Besides the eighty-nine who died on board the *Ferö*, seventy-five died not long after landing. The *Pelican*, which arrived in St. Thomas March 29, 1673, lost seven of its people en route and fifty-three after landing, out of a total of only sixty-seven. The galliot *St. Thomas*, which arrived at the island June 2, 1675, lost five out of nine men; and the *Merman*, which arrived on May 12, 1675, lost thirty-four out of fifty-eight persons. There were enough survivors, however, to spread reports which required no exaggeration to give the West Indies the reputation of being a veritable charnel house. The resulting depletion was made good by further recourse to convicts and nondescripts, immigrants against whom the governor never ceased to rail. "Uncontrollable fellows, whom neither *Holmen*[20] nor the penitentiary could improve," "lazy, shiftless louts, who were of no use at home," "vagabonds and idlers," are terms employed by Iversen in describing various of his former charges, even after several years had intervened. To obtain honest or capable employees under these circumstances became well-nigh impossible. The knotty problem of securing suitable ministers reflects the prevailing difficulties. After Kjeld Jensen's death on the outward voyage in 1672, George Jensen Morsing was appointed minister, but he dropped dead on April 23, 1673, just as he was about to take possession of the house assigned to him. The Schleswiger, Theodore Christensen Risbrich (*Theodorus Christianus Holsatus*), who succeeded to the post, quarrelled with the governor from the beginning, called him a tyrant, and insisted on preaching in German, to the governor's disgust. He was finally permitted, in fact urged to leave the land in October, 1677. In 1679 he brought a damage suit against the Company, and met its counter-charge of drunkenness by explaining that such a state "was easily brought about by the terrible stuff they make in that land,"—referring to the young rum called "kill-devil" because of its reputed powers.

The Danes were obviously passing through the most difficult pioneering period in the founding of plantation colonies, and learned, in common with other plantation pioneers, whether Spanish, English, Dutch or French, that the first serious prob-

[20] *Holmen:* workhouse for prisoners in Copenhagen.

lem clamoring for solution was that of labor supply.[21] As early as the beginning of the sixteenth century, when the Spanish government began to concern itself with the preservation of the aborigines, who proved unadaptable to severe labor, African slaves had been resorted to as a substitute for native and white labor.[22] White convict labor was cursed at in Virginia, Barbados and Martinique as heartily as at St. Thomas. Indentured servants were among those who accompanied Governor Iversen on the initial voyage; but fevers, climate, and careless living killed them off faster than they could be replaced. This labor difficulty seems to have been anticipated in the charter to some extent when provision was made for absorption of the African company of Glückstadt into the West India Company.[23] The union was in fact complete November 28, 1674, when Christian V issued an edict allowing the Danish West India Company to trade on the Guinea coast.[24] Meanwhile the African company had sent over a ship to Guinea in 1673 which added one hundred and three slaves to the St. Thomas labor supply; [25] some smaller purchases were made from local dealers, and another voyage was taken by the *Cornelia* in the summer following, probably for the same company.[26]

In 1675 a Portuguese bark was found wrecked on the shore with a slave cargo, from which were secured twenty-four wretched negroes, of whom ten survived long enough to be entered on the books of the Company. The Dutch traders seemed peculiarly gifted with the power to scent a bargain from afar, whether in slaves, sugar, or silks. A certain Landert van

[21] See Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, p. 283, for a statement of the conditions in the French islands; also Pierre Heinrich, *La Louisiane sous la Compagnie des Indes*, pp. 32 *et seq.*

[22] G. Scelle, *La traité negrière aux Indes de Castille* (Paris, 1906), I, 123–125, 139–161.

[23] See ¶ 16 of *octroi*.

[24] Krarup, *Jörgen Iversen*, 31. Christiansborg Castle, near Accra on the Guinea coast, had been built by the Swedes in 1645 and captured from them by the Danes in 1657. The history of the Glückstadt African Company up to the date of its merger with the Danish West India Company is exceedingly meager. Denmark finally sold its African possessions to Great Britain in 1850.

[25] *Mariager MS.*, 22.

[26] L. Fogtman, *Alphabetisk Register* . . . (see July 10, 1674).

der Busse disposed of a batch of sixteen slaves to the Company in 1678, perhaps the remnant of a cargo that he had retailed down the islands. One Paul Jensen from Stade on the Elbe, but recorded as a "Swede," also sold slaves to the Company. That the slave trade of the Company was practically at a standstill is shown by the fact that the king in 1680 granted permission to Oliver Pauli, for a time secretary of the Company in Copenhagen, to send a ship to Guinea for slaves. The growth of the colony in these early years, when rumors of pestilence and disaffection were plentiful and dividends were scarce, was naturally slow. From a population of barely a hundred each of whites and blacks in 1673, the number had risen by 1680 (the last year of Iversen's stewardship) to a hundred and fifty-six whites and one hundred and seventy-five blacks.[27]

During these early years the colony at St. Thomas was too much concerned with keeping alive to become a dangerous competitor to the Dutch, French, or English. Nevertheless, the appearance of the Danes was greeted by a number of protests. The English governor of the Leeward Islands, General Sir Charles Wheler, lost no time in denying the rights of the Danes to any of the Virgin Islands, but on the vigorous representations of the Danish ambassador in London, Marcus Giöe, Charles II disavowed Wheler's actions, recalled him from his post and appointed Sir William Stapleton in his place. Charles' letter was dated September 23, 1672.[28] Spanish protests came in from the governor of Porto Rico in 1673 and 1675, based on the argument that St. Thomas lay on the coast of Yucatan and Campeachy, which with the surrounding islands were the property of Spain. The directors, by way of reply, presented a memorandum to the Danish king, setting forth the fact that Spain claimed all the Virgin Islands in opposition to the claims of all nations, but that she did not actually occupy one; and further, that the Danes were looked upon by Charles II of England, in his letter (September 23, 1672) as rightful occupants. Christian V had his envoyé at Madrid, George Reedtz, set forth these arguments,

[27] Krarup, *Iversen*, 33; E. V. Lose (in *Kirkehistorisk Saml.*, 6 R. II B., 298)

[28] *Cal. Col. 1675–76, Addenda 1574–1674*, No. 397. The relations of Stapleton with the St. Thomas authorities will be discussed in the next chapter.

and gradually the pretensions of the Spaniards dwindled down for the time to an occasional more or less innocuous reference.[29] The French had no valid grounds for protest. Their nearest colony was St. Croix which had been taken from the Spaniards in 1650 by an expedition sent by de Poincy from St. Christopher. Colbert, in his efforts to build up French commercial power, had practically closed French colonies to foreign trade, but the Dutch wars of Louis XIV made traffic between France and her West Indian colonies so precarious that Governor de Baas of St. Croix was forced in 1673 to open the island to Danish commerce during six months to save his people from starving.[30] But when Denmark joined in the war against the French, this trade ceased, and the St. Thomas creditors were left with some thousands of rixdollars worth of valueless paper on their hands.[31]

The news that war had broken out came in September, 1675, and for the time being the French contented themselves with seizing the Company's yacht at St. Croix. Finally, on February 2, 1678, the French actually attacked St. Thomas. Governor Iversen had made valiant efforts to complete the fort to the point where it could withstand attack; a tower had recently been finished, and when requested to surrender he was able to bid the enemy defiance. The French left after carrying off a few slaves and some free negroes. After their departure the work on the fort was continued with greater vigor than ever so that by 1680 the governor was able to record that the fort was completed. With the one hundred and fifty men, white and black, that he had available, he felt himself able, so he reported to his masters, to beat off six hundred or even one thousand men.

But the strenuous work involved in preparation against outside attack had driven the planters as well as the governor almost to desperation. With the malcontents under the Dutchman Baggaert against him, with his health undermined by the strain of responsibility, and his temper becoming more and

[29] *Mariager MS.*, 18, 19.

[30] Mims, 323; Krarup, *Iversen*, 35.

[31] "Debtors on St. Croix" were still in 1708 debited with 2,293 *rdl.*, 5 marks in the Company's books at St. Thomas. *N. J. for St. Th.*, 1705–1708.

more violent, his wife dead, and revengeful enemies on all sides, Governor Iversen finally insisted so strongly on being relieved that the directors proceeded in August and September, 1679, to choose a successor. They found one in the Holsteiner Nicholas Esmit, the only available candidate applying. He did not arrive until July 4, 1680, when he was received by Governor Iversen with appropriate pomp and ceremony. The new governor found the harbor supplied with a good fort, a road running through the island, fifty plantations surveyed, of which forty-six were actually occupied, the other four not having recovered from the attack of the French; he found the Company in possession of two plantations of its own, equipped with forty-nine slaves (men, women, and children), thirty-one cattle, seven horses, poultry, numbers of hogs, and with sheep and goats pastured on nearby islets.[32]

Although the little colony showed signs of vitality, the Company could not begin to pay dividends. Of seven ships, including yachts and the like, which the Company or King had put into the West India or Guinea trade, several had undergone expensive repairs or costly seizures, and two, the *Charlotte Amalia* and the *St. Vincent*, had been wrecked altogether, bringing about a direct loss of 40,000 *rdl.* to the Company.[33] In the cargoes brought into Copenhagen had been included sugar, cotton, indigo, tobacco, ginger, cacao, "carret" (sea turtle), hides, pockwood and other valuable timber.[34] Only a half score of passports had been issued during the years 1671–1680 to ships bound from Copenhagen to the West Indies, and five for ships sailing to Guinea. Even the extension of trading privileges granted by the Company in its mandate of February 22, 1675, did not bring about the hoped for results.[35] Matters had

[32] Buck ("Bocken") and St. George ("S. Jorris") islets, and particularly Water Island, just outside the harbor, were used for pasturage purposes, Krarup, *Iversen*, 38.

[33] *Mariager MS.*, 22.

[34] *Ibid.*, 19, 23.

[35] By this mandate, the Company permitted its own shareholders to trade with St. Thomas on the payment to the government there of a ten per cent. duty on goods imported; while if they imported slaves they should pay a "recognition" or duty of one slave out of each fifty. Strangers might bring in goods

come to a low pass largely because of the reaction of conditions in Europe upon the commercial situation both in the capital and in the colony.

In carrying out his second war against the Dutch, Louis XIV had indeed secured the assistance of the former ally of the United Provinces, Sweden, and for a time that of England. The Netherlands were allied from the first with the Hohenzollern elector of Brandenburg and were later to be joined by the Emperor and by their traditional enemy, Spain. Into this armed camp Denmark threw herself on the side of the Dutch, but against the Swedes, from whom she hoped to regain her lost provinces. Such a state of war not only militated against the success of the Company's efforts, but threatened the very existence of its American factory.

for these return cargoes at the same rate of ten per cent. Each of the Danish skippers was to bring to St. Thomas two capable workingmen, for whom the Company would pay 10 *rdl.* each; while each failure to make such delivery was to be penalized by a fine of 20 *rdl.*

This was very similar to the *Arrêt* promulgated by Colbert, January 22, 1671, to encourage the importation of white servants. Vessels of 100 tons or over were to carry two cows or two mares, and those of less to carry two indentured servants in place of each cow or mare. Mims, *op. cit.*, 282. Three Bergen merchants, Jörgen Thormöhlen, Cordt von Woyda, and Daniel Wolszman, received permission to send ships to the West Indies in this trade. A Christiania ship seems to have got to St. Thomas with a passport from the king, but without the knowledge or permission of the directors. *Mariager MS.*, 26–28.

CHAPTER II

THE CRITICAL PERIOD (1680–1690)

THE conclusion of the peace with Sweden in 1679 was followed by a series of efforts on the part of the Danish crown to revive and quicken the economic life of the kingdom. The Board of Trade applied itself anew to the task, and a special commission with Jens Juel at its head was created in September, 1681, to supplement that body.[1] In this revival of interest in commercial and kindred matters, the West India and Guinea venture came in for its share of attention. On March 3, 1680, the king issued an order, the provisions of which indicate clearly the low state of the company and the heroic measures necessary to fan into a flame its spark of remaining life. In this order the king pledged his assistance by offering to fit out and send a ship to Guinea to fetch slaves for use in St. Thomas; and he promised to send the needed number of men to the Guinea forts, which were sadly in need of assistance.[2] The resolution of February 8, 1675, confiscating to the Company the capital of participants who had not paid in their full quota was confirmed, and now each shareholder was assessed an amount equal to ten per cent. of the par value of his share. If he failed to pay, he was liable to lose his entire investment. Moreover, all government employees in his majesty's dominions were "invited" to invest ten per cent. of their salary, if the latter was over 300 *rdl.* a year, in shares; if they had not paid in the required amount within four or six weeks, it would be deducted from their salaries. Finally, the king reached out after those wealthy but apathetic burghers and others who had hitherto refrained from investing or had been unduly cautious, by requiring that all carriage

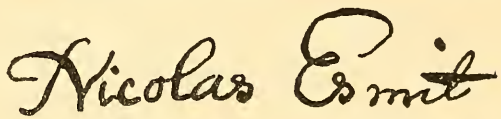
[1] Other members of this commission were Michael Vibe, Peter Brandt, Paul Rosenpalm, and "*procureur-général*" Peter Scavenius. *D. R. H.*, IV, 615.

[2] *Mariager MS.*, 37, 38.

owners whose shares did not amount to 500 *sldl.* must invest 60 *rdl.* once for all.

Whatever the king and company's directors might propose, it was after all the servants of the company in the West Indies and on the Guinea coast on whom would rest the duty of disposing; and the success of their efforts would be largely conditioned by various external circumstances over which they had no control. To carry out the details required by this scheme of rehabilitation and readjustment, a committee of four [3] headed by Herman Meyer, councilor of war, admiralty and commerce, was appointed to take charge of supplying the Guinea forts with men and munitions and equipping ships for both Guinea and the West Indies. The result was that the *Merman* was sent out to Guinea [4] under Captain Ove Ovesen, who took with him a new merchant and commander for the Guinea factory, while the *Crowned Griffin* was sent to St. Thomas, passing Kronborg castle on September 4, 1680, under Captain John Blom.[5]

The home authorities had done all that they could, and assuredly no less than was needed. It remained to be seen to what extent their efforts would be seconded by their employees and favored by circumstances. The new governor of St. Thomas, Nicholas Esmit, had given the directors plenty of promises, but



had been unable to produce any recommendations. The pending resignation of Iversen gave them no time to search about for candidates. Esmit claimed to have been a skipper, called himself captain, and asserted that he had served his apprenticeship with the English at Jamaica. His name Esmit was probably

[3] The others were Peter Bladt, *Assessor* in the Board of Trade, Mauritz van der Thy, and Claus Sohn.

[4] No pass appears to be recorded in *Vestindisk Reg. 1671–99* for this ship. *Merman* = *Hafmanden* or *Havmanden.*

[5] *Mariager MS.*, 34 *et seq.*; *Vest. Reg., 1671–99.* The *Crowned Griffin* = *den Cronede Griff.*

originally Schmidt and would point to a sojourn in Spain. He was apparently related to that John Esmit who, according to a petition filed in 1671 had been consul in Spain for four years and thereafter receiver of customs in Copenhagen for twelve years and had been at one time in charge of the renovation of the city.[6]

On his arrival at St. Thomas, Captain Esmit was all amiability, but he began very soon to lend his ear to George Iversen's enemies, particularly to the Dutch absconder, Carl Baggaert. He released one Peter Jansen from the prison into which his predecessor had cast him, and before Iversen had got ready to leave for home *viâ* St. Croix, which he did on September 20, 1680, Esmit had so far broken with the former governor as to forbid his living at the fort. The obvious attempt of the new encumbent to curry favor with the lawless element did not bode well for the colony.

It must be borne in mind that since the treaty of Madrid (1670) the English governors in the West Indies had been strictly enjoined to suppress privateering. Their task had been a difficult one, for Spain not only protested against English logwood cutters being allowed to exploit the swamps of Yucatan but effected a considerable number of captures.[7] The distinction between logwood cutting and piracy was apparently not very clear to the Spanish official mind.

Among the most conscientious officials were Sir Thomas Lynch, who was governor of Jamaica in 1671 and after an absence of a few years was reappointed in 1681, and Sir William Stapleton, governor of the Leeward Islands. Assuredly privateering and the development of plantations and legitimate trade did not go hand in hand. Until there was reasonable guarantee that plantation products would be safe from seizure on the high seas, men would be chary of sinking their funds or investing their labor in plantations.

From the viewpoint of British expansion, commercial and territorial, the Danish islands, like the Dutch and French, were

[6] Nielsen, *Köbenhavn*, V, 62 *et seq.*

[7] It was reported in 1674 that 75 English ships had been seized by the Spaniards since 1670. Beer, *The Old Colonial System, 1660–1688*, II, 68.

on the frontier between the Spaniards and the English. This frontier had been pushed forward by a straight conquest to include Jamaica; buccaneers had made sport of it and were finally to extend it permanently into Campeachy. It was in this twilight zone, haunted by buccaneers and men of their type, that St. Thomas had found itself since its settlement. To keep the island out of complications with its powerful neighbor required more firmness and clear-headedness than was possessed by Nicholas Esmit. Of his early history as governor only a few enlightening documents exist, but a letter written by him to the directors May 17, 1682, is sufficiently illustrative of the ways of the privateers and of their reception in St. Thomas to justify quotation:

"There arrived here February 8 [1682] a ship of unknown origin, some two hundred tons in size, without guns, passport or letters, and with seven men, French, English, and German. On being questioned they replied that they had gone out of *Espaniola* [Hispaniola] from the harbor of Petit Guava (*sic*) with two hundred men and a French commission to cruise on the Spaniards. They had come to the coast of Terra Firma and landed in the river of Danan [Darien?] where they were joined by the wild Indians who were to show them the way over the land to the South Sea, which they also did; . . . and they took a little ship or bark with a hundred blocks [bars?] of silver, next a large vessel, and finally a Spanish galleon, with which they did much damage over all the South Sea; and after having robbed for two years in the South Seas, they escaped around Terra del fago [del Fuego] . . . and on January 28 came to anchor in Antigo [Antigua], where all the English in the crew went over on the English ship with all their gold and silver. The rest, namely seven men, who had risked [?] and doubled their money, sailed for Petit Goava, but on the way the boat leaked, so they asked to come in to St. Thomas and there careen the boat, which was done at *Strand Slucken* [Gregerie Beach?] by the aid of thirty men sent out by me. I bought what little cacao they had, the rest of their plunder they brought ashore and divided among our people. The ship was no longer usable. I have decided not to confiscate it, in order to avoid any unfriendliness

with sea-robbers. The inhabitants of St. Thomas have decided that the said seven men shall remain among them." [8]

But clearly enough such cheerful receptions could not go on very long without arousing serious misgivings in the watchful governor of the Leeward Islands, Sir William Stapleton. On August 18, 1682, one Captain "Toms Wadsten" (Thomas Watson?) came into St. Thomas harbor with his sloop, the *Prosperous*, and received permission of the governor to come in to revictual. The vessel had come from Barbados, it was said, and was bound for Jamaica. On the captain's remaining in the harbor longer than the time agreed on, and selling great quantities of "kill-devil," stuffs, linen, gloves, and the like, his vessel and remaining goods were seized and declared good prize. A commission headed by the Carl Baggaert before mentioned, and including "Mr. William Borth" (Burke?) an "expert buyer of English and Irish wares," found the confiscated cargo to be worth £108, 13*s.* 2*d.* On August 26, Captain Watson and his mate, John Campion, were condemned to be hanged. This interesting ceremony occurred "in the proper place, where ordinary justice is done." There the victim was suspended "by a strap;" "Robbert Wautersen van Rotterdam" was ordered banished, while the chief witness, John Finlasson, was to leave

[8] *Breve og Dokumenter, 1683–1689*, from a copy by O. Pauli, the company's secretary in Copenhagen. This rather quaint account of the rovings of a buccaneering expedition in the South Seas is really the Danish version in a nutshell of the famous voyage described at length in John Exquemelin's history of the buccaneers. In the London edition of that work, which was published in 1685, was included under a separate title "The Dangerous Voyage and Bold Attempts of Capt. Bartholomew Sharp and others, written by Mr. Basil Ringrose, who was all along present." One of the nine "captains" of whom that writer makes mention was Bartholomew Sharp, who was sent to England with some of his fellows, at the instance of the Spanish ambassador in London, where they were to be tried for piracy. After having secured his acquittal with the others on the plea that the Spaniards had fired the first shot, Captain Sharp returned to the West Indies, eventually settling down in St. Thomas, where he succeeded in making the governor's existence miserable. In John Lorentz's term of office, sixteen years after his South Sea exploit, after sickness had deprived him of the use of his hands, he was still able, through the indiscriminate use of an active and violent tongue, to earn a sentence of imprisonment for life from an indignant governor and council. Lorentz to Directors (24 June, 1698). *C. B., 1690–1713.*

the island within a fortnight. The order was signed by Baggaert and one Jochum Delicaet, a wily Dutchman who will come in for attention later.[9] Before Governor Stapleton could get a chance to secure the delivery of the sloop to him, Nicholas Esmit was replaced by his brother Adolph, who had become the leader of a faction of the more unruly planters.[10] Adolph was shifty, shrewd, vain, and at times boastful, and an exceedingly exasperating neighbor to deal with.

It is in the period when the Esmit brothers were responsible for the government of St. Thomas, that the island gained its reputation as a resort for pirates. For that reason their relations with pirates, or with persons suspected of being such, deserve to be examined with some minuteness. On October 7, 1782, Governor Stapleton sent Thomas Biss, his deputy on Tortola, to "the Honorable Governor Esmit *in* St. Thomas Island," for to have written "*of* St. Thomas Island" would have been an official recognition of the usurpation. On the demand of Biss for the restoration of a sloop, which he maintained had been seized from its lawful owner, as well as on the request for the delivery of seven white servants who had run away from Montserrat, Adolph Esmit gave contradictory and evasive answers. When the English official demanded the runaway servants, Esmit had replied that this was a free port [11] and that anyone asking for protection was entitled to it. "Sir," was the reply of Biss, "if your port is free, why did you seize the sloop? If some rogues have freedom here, why not all?" [12]

Later, in a communication to Biss, Esmit offered to restore the sloop (which he had already sold at auction for twenty-five pieces of eight) on the presentation of a certificate from Gover-

[9] *A. E., . . . 1682–85*, "Lit. A." and "Lit. B." appended to A. Esmit's letter to the king (1 Sept., 1683). Delicaet's first name was frequently spelled *Joachim*.

[10] On 3 August, 1682, Nicholas had discharged a debt of 3,000 *rdl.* to his brother, described in the document as "young of years and faithful," by deeding him his share of a plantation 3,000 feet long and stocked with 37 slaves, houses, indigo, "works," etc. The deposing of Nicholas took place in the autumn. (*B. & D., 1683–89.*)

[11] This appears to be the first reference to St. Thomas as a free port.

[12] *Cal. Col., 1681–85*, No. 777 (11 Nov., 1682).

nor Stapleton showing that he had authority to receive it, and on payment of certain charges.[13] In a moderately toned letter of December 12, addressed to "Capt. Adolphus Eastmitt," Stapleton reiterated his demand for restitution of sloop and runaways "now that I understand that you have the power in yr hand." Esmit's reply did not entirely suit the English governor who wrote, "It doesn't show much inclination to live in peace, to say that some [of the seven servants] have gone to Leeward and one is in the [Danish] king's service, which is all one with saying their money in part is employed in the king's service soe is the boat in which they were transported and ye sloop and goods too."

But the governor wanted his neighbors to understand that his patience had limits. "You may be confident," he added, "that the detention of sloop goods and servants will not be forgotten. It were no hard matter for me to let you otherwise know it but my inclination is otherwise." Esmit declined to be bluffed, however. In his reply, dated January 8, 1683, he refused to assume responsibility for the acts of his brother or to trouble himself further concerning the whole matter, saucily adding that "I know you serve his Mayts (Majesty) of Engenlant whom I have had the Honner to Serve as Capt: whose Commission I have [and] alsoo another from his Rojall Heighnis: and att present I Sarve my Master the Souerin King of Dennemarck and thus I conclude." [14]

Meantime Governor Stapleton had incorporated his grievances into a vigorous letter which he had sent to the Lords of Trade and Plantation on November 11, 1682.[15] They suffered alike, he explained, from Dutch and Danes, from fugitive servants, black and white, and from seamen and other debtors, who had run away to these islands and were never restored, on the ground that the freedom of their port protects all, and he despaired as to how to proceed except by the law of the Turks and Algerines. The complaint was promptly conveyed to the Danish envoy at London, Christian Lente, by the Earl of

[13] A. Esmit to Mr. Biss (20 Nov., 1682). *A. E., 1682–89.*
[14] *A. E., 1682–89.*
[15] *Cal. Col., 1681–85,* No. 777.

Sunderland, with a request for the restoration of the sloop and servants.[16] Within a fortnight the Danish king had written a vigorous letter to Esmit rebuking him and ordering him to restore ship and fugitive servants forthwith, on pain of summary punishment of death. Further complaint of violence would certainly bring this punishment upon him.[17]

It could assuredly not have missed the observation of the *de facto* governor that serious trouble was in the wind; and so long as he had secured no commission, his position was bound to be exceedingly precarious. The directors of the company in Copenhagen had early learned of Nicholas Esmit's doings at St. Thomas, and decided to have him replaced at the earliest opportunity by a more likely incumbent. In March 1682 George Iversen who had recuperated from his severe experience again sought his former post. In this and in his plans for strengthening the colony by another consignment of convicts Iversen was supported by Jens Juel and Albert Gyldensparre who with Edward Holst, assumed the direction of the company's affairs in 1682, on the resignation of Hans Nansen and Herman Meyer.[18] The governor-elect received his commission September 26, 1682, his final instructions on October 28, and left Elsinore on November 10, just when Stapleton was formulating his charges against Adolph Esmit. But Iversen was never to reach his destination, for after he had passed the Azores, he and those in authority with him fell victims to a mutiny instigated by their convict cargo.[19]

As the news of this latest misfortune was reaching the directors at Copenhagen, Adolph Esmit was sending his recently married English wife Charity to Denmark to plead his case and procure him a commission.[20] He sent in numerous documents

[16] *Cal. Col., 1681–85*, No. 993 (Mar. 8, 1683).

[17] *Ibid.*, No. 1003 (Mar. 17, 1683). Another copy of the same document has been calendared by mistake under date of Mar. 17, 1684 (No. 1597).

[18] *Mariager MS.*, 44.

[19] Krarup, *Iversen*, 43 *et seq.* Most of the mutineers were caught and horribly put to death in Copenhagen. *Cf.* Haring, *Buccaneers*, 237, where "Everson" is confused with Milan.

[20] *A. E., 1682–89* (May 1, 1683).

intended to prove his brother's treachery and justify his own actions.[21] Charity Esmit was a shrewd woman, of wide acquaintance in official, if not indeed in royal circles. She was an adept at intriguing, and lost no time in pulling all available wires to keep her husband in his place.[22] Her insistence was rewarded when the king and the directors decided early in July that the low estate of the company demanded that for the present the incumbent be confirmed in his office, and issued the commission on July 17.

Before Charity could bring her husband the much desired commission, matters had rapidly approached a crisis in St. Thomas. In response to requests from West Indian governors for men of war to protect their interests, the English king had sent H. M. S. *Ruby* under Capt. Richard May to the Leeward Islands early in 1683. In his search for a French pirate ship, *La Trompeuse*, captained by the notorious Jean Hamlin, he visited St. Thomas early in July,[23] but failed to find the ship, although Sir Thomas Lynch had reported the presence of *La Trompeuse* in a letter to the Lord President of the Council, written on May 6.[24] But the English were not to be balked so easily of their prey. At three o'clock on the morning of July 30, Capt. Charles Carlile put into St. Thomas harbor with H. M. S. *Francis*, a ship sent by the king early in the year with ammunition and supplies for the new forts at St. Christopher, Nevis, Montserrat, and Antigua. Carlile had with him a letter of recommendation from Sir William Stapleton. The object of the search, *La Trompeuse*, a ship of thirty-two guns and six boats (patararoes) was lying at anchor within, and (according to Capt. Carlile) the *Francis* was greeted by some shots from either the pirate or the fort. On Tuesday, July 31, the English

[21] An English pirate, George Bond, was one of those whose depositions were included. Various threats made by Nicholas Esmit at St. Christopher and St. Eustatius against St. Thomas inhabitants were adduced. *A. E., 1682–89* (May 1, 1683).

[22] One of Adolph Esmit's most steadfast friends was Steen Andersen Bille, vice commandant of Copenhagen in 1676, appointed to the war college in 1679, and made a noble in that year.

[23] *A. E., 1682–89* (July 2/12, 1685).

[24] *Cal. Col., 1681–85*, No. 1065 (May 6, 1683).

captain sent a protest to the governor concerning the shooting, and planned to burn up the pirate ship that night. The governor's explanation that he had already taken her into custody and sent her men ashore did not help matters, for in that case he was responsible for the firing on the English flag. Esmit's efforts to cajole Carlile ashore by sending him a present and an invitation to dine were too transparent to succeed. Carlile was in no mood to risk a delay that might bring in the pirate ship's consort, which was daily expected, so he sent his men on board her that evening (Tuesday) and fired her. In the conflagration, another privateer lying near at hand caught fire and was burned.[25]

In vain did Esmit fulminate against this confessedly high-handed measure and against Carlile's threat to summon three more frigates to his assistance if Esmit did not deliver up the pirate Englishmen who were ashore. Esmit admitted the firing of a shot from the castle but maintained that his purpose was merely to secure due salute. Since he was accused of undue intimacy with pirates, he sent over in irons the man who fired the shot. The rest, he explained, had fled.[26]

Esmit's first care was to notify the French governor of St. Croix, for the French might be expected to put in a claim for the restitution of property belonging to one of their subjects,[27] although in his claim to Carlile Esmit argued that the frigate belonged to the King of Denmark. Stapleton had now secured the means by which he could back up his words with powder and ball, and was prepared to press his advantage. On August 15 he demanded that Esmit deliver up Jean Hamlin, whom the St. Thomas governor had evidently befriended. "Have a care," he wrote, "I shall come from the Leeward Islands with an armed force, blow you up as quickly as the *Trompeuse*, and pound any pirate that you may have fitted out. If you have a spark of honesty in you restore me the sloop and runaway serv-

[25] *Cal. Col., 1681–85*, Nos. 1168, 1173, 1188, 1190; *A. E., 1682–89* (Aug. 1, 1683).

[26] *Ibid.*, No. 1173. Esmit to Stapleton (Aug. 1, 1683).

[27] *Ibid.*, No. 1381. The Chevalier of St. Laurens, French governor of Martinique, sent a protest to Governor Stapleton Nov. 13, 1683, maintaining not without reason that his men should have spared the ships and punished the pirates.

ants that I have already claimed." [28] In a letter to the Lords of Trade written on the same day Stapleton expressed himself with equal vigor and at greater length. He was sending Carlile out after Cooke and Bond, two other English pirates who had been befriended by the Danish governor. "There is more need of such [*i. e.*, good ships] in the Leeward Islands than in any other government," he wrote, "with their mixture of Spanish, French, Danes, Dutch, and Indians." [29] Stapleton's wounded feelings received some balm when a copy reached him of Christian V's order to Esmit's brother Nicholas to deliver to the English island of Montserrat the sloop and goods seized, and likewise to restore the seven runaway servants.[30] He may also have extracted comfort from the success of his men in breaking up the "castle" that Esmit had caused to be built on St. John, and in despoiling of their live stock the grazing islets near St. Thomas harbor.[31]

Esmit was nothing daunted by Stapleton's threats. He seized English sloops when he could lay hands on them and sold Jean Hamlin a new sloop, perhaps one of those seized from the English. Hamlin went back to his old trade [32] in company with a Captain Morgan, a pirate and a namesake of that other Morgan who was trying in the capacity of lieutenant governor of Jamaica to suppress piracy in Caribbean waters. Captain George Bond, master of the ship *Summer Island* of London, had bought a Dutch vessel at St. Thomas, fitted her out there, turned pirate, and sent some of his captured booty back to St. Thomas for safe keeping.[33]

Madame Esmit's return from Copenhagen in November 1683 with the coveted commission was a triumph of which neither she

[28] *Cal. Col., 1681–85*, No. 1189 (Aug. 15, 1683).

[29] *Ibid.*, No. 1188. The Indians were on the rampage in the Windward Islands at this time.

[30] Adolph Esmit's commission was dated July 17, 1683. The order for the release of the sloop was signed Oct. 4, 1683. *Cal. Col., 1681–85*, No. 2087.

[31] *A. E., 1682–89* (Aug. 26, 1683). "Lit. D."

[32] *Cal. Col., 1681–85*, No. 1223. Stapleton to Lords of Trade (Aug. 30, 1683). Before long Hamlin is again heard of as a captain of *La Nouvelle Trompeuse*, which Stapleton asserted was fitted and protected by the godly New England independents. *Ibid.*, No. 2042 (Jan. 7, 1685).

[33] *Ibid.*, Nos. 1471–1474, 1535.

nor her husband was slow to take advantage. Difficulty of communication between new and old world meant that the offences and grievances of the summer, which had been accumulating in London and Copenhagen, became the topic of diplomatic negotiation in the winter following. The commission arrived none too soon, for malcontents within the colony were already plotting Adolph Esmit's overthrow. Now that he was governor in his own right, he could proceed against his local enemies with a vigor born of authority. The first to become a target for the governor's wrath was the leader of the plot, Otto Eden, who was condemned to death in the month following Madame's return.[34] His two chief accomplices got off with fines, and banishment to their plantations for nine months.[35] Esmit showed very much the same instability of character in dealing with the inhabitants, that he showed in his relations with his neighbors on other islands. The return of Madame Esmit could not but further embitter the life of the conscientious, if irascible, Stapleton. "Never was like impudence on the earth as of Esmit and his wife," he wrote to the Lords of Trade, February 13, 1684. "She gives out that she is the relict of an English baron."

Had Governor Iversen lived to arrive safely at his post early in 1683 when he was expected, the company might have been spared much expense and annoyance, and the colony a harrowing experience. For Esmit was no more inclined to give up his habits than Stapleton was to let him cultivate them in peace. In April 1684 Sir William issued an order to Col. Thomas Hill, authorizing him to secure any persons that he might find in the Virgin Islands, especially Danes, and bring them to Nevis.[36] Before long Esmit's secretary, Martin Borel, with three negroes was captured and detained in arrest at Nevis. When Esmit threatened to send the secretary's seven children over into Stapleton's safekeeping in case their mother who was dangerously ill, should die,[37] the secretary was returned.

[34] *A. E., 1682–89* (Nov. 20, and Dec., 1683).
[35] *Ibid.* (Jan. 26, 1684). They were Jochum Delicaet and Jan Borris.
[36] *Cal. Col., 1681–85*, 1947, III (April 3, 1684).
[37] *Ibid.*, 1947, II (June 11, 1684); *A. E.* (June 16, 1684).

About two months before Madame Esmit's return, and too early to permit the news of it to reach Copenhagen before she had made off with her husband's precious commission, Stapleton had sent in two letters with his latest grievances against his recalcitrant neighbor.[38] The news transmitted by Stapleton concerning Jean Hamlin proved the last straw, and on November 14, 1683 the king issued an Order in Council authorizing Governor Stapleton to seize the governor of St. Thomas and to hinder the further harboring of pirates in that place.[39] The Danish envoy was notified of the action taken, and the sending of the order was delayed until he could communicate with the government at Copenhagen.[40] In February, 1684, the Earl of Sunderland, Secretary of State, was informed by Christian Lente, the Danish envoy, that the King of Denmark had ordered the arrest of the governor of St. Thomas.[41]

Affairs were by this time moving rather too swiftly for the comfort of the directors at Copenhagen. On account of Iversen's death, they had been forced against their will to confirm the usurper and harborer of pirates in his office until they could secure a new incumbent. But the patience of the English government was evidently exhausted, and it was in no mood to listen to Esmit's counter complaints. So in a shareholders' meeting held on March 10, the directors of the Danish company were asked to choose a new governor.

Two available candidates presented themselves, "auditor" Balthasar Lachmann and Gabriel Milan. The latter was selected because of his knowledge of languages and of his business ability to fill the vacant place.[42] The recommendation, dated March 14, was signed by the executive committee of the directors, consisting of Albert Gyldensparre, a brother of the disgraced Count Griffenfeld, Abraham Wüst, later to become a member of the Board of Trade, and Edward Holst. The terms on which the office was to be bestowed were presently agreed upon, and on

[38] *Cal. Col., 1681–85*, No. 1188 (Aug. 15) and 1222 (Aug. 30, 1683).
[39] *Ibid.*, No. 1382.
[40] Krarup, *Milan*, 3.
[41] *Cal. Col., 1681–85*, No. 1547 (Feb. 19).
[42] Krarup, *Milan*, 3.

May 7, 1684, the king issued an order deposing Adolph Esmit and naming Gabriel Milan as governor of St. Thomas in his stead.[43]

To take the new governor and his retinue over to the West Indies, the king set aside the warship, *Fortuna*, armed with forty guns and provided with a crew of eighty men, and placed in command Captain George Meyer, a German-speaking officer who had been in the Danish service for five years. Besides his own family, consisting of a wife, a grown son, Felix, and four children, Milan brought with him a governess, three maids, three lackeys, a laborer, and a Tartar.[44] As merchant at the St. Thomas factory and next in authority to the governor, the directors sent along Niels Lassen, and as "assistant" in the company's office (a clerical place) John Lorentz, a young man from Flensborg in Schleswig who had contracted to serve the company for four years.

Lavish provision was made for the governor's comfort. Various kinds of foreign wines were taken on board, and place was even found for six or seven dogs. The king had furnished him with 6,000 *rdl.* cash for his immediate needs and given him part of his salary in advance. Certainly no charge of niggardliness could be laid against the Company, the entire original stock of which amounted to not more than 44,866 *rdl.* (64,300 *sldl.*). Captain Meyer was entrusted with a secret order directing that in case of Milan's death Niels Lassen should succeed to the governorship, and that in case of the death of the latter, Lieutenant Christopher Heins of St. Thomas should take charge.[45] The *Fortuna* remained long enough to receive a copy of Charles II's orders to Stapleton to assist the new governor in case Esmit should resist.[46]

The man who was charged with the responsibility of redeeming the good name of his country in the far-off Caribbean had led an eventful life. Milan came of a reputable Jewish family which had connections in Portugal, Flanders, and

[43] Christian V. to A. Esmit. *A. E., 1682–89.*
[44] Krarup, *Milan*, 5.
[45] *Ibid.*, 6.
[46] *Cal. Col., 1681–85*, No. 1676 (May 13).

Hamburg. His family was related by marriage to the well-known Portuguese-Jewish houses of da Costa and de Castro. He had, according to his own account, begun his career as a

soldier, and had served under Cardinal Mazarin in France. In 1667 he appears in the rôle of an Amsterdam merchant; he was concerned with financing a foreign journey undertaken by Prince George of Denmark; in 1668 he was made Danish factor, and in 1670 factor-general, in Amsterdam.

In this capacity he composed reports on political and commercial matters, a circumstance that brought him into confidential relations with various important personages at the Danish court, among whom the Peter Schumacher (Count Griffenfeld) before mentioned was his chief stay until the latter's fall in 1676. Among his linguistic acquisitions he counted Spanish, French, Portuguese, German, and Dutch.

Milan had tried in vain to get an appointment to the Board of Trade on the ground that he knew the tricks of traders and money-changers, and he had accumulated a list of claims against his royal master for services rendered in the Netherlands—from espionage to loans of money—which he had small chance of collecting in cash. His prospects of getting into the employ of the state were improved when on January 18, 1682, he secured a certificate showing that he had discussed with a Hamburg Lutheran minister the relative merits of Catholicism and Protestantism, had thereby become convinced of the truth of the Augsburg Confession, and had partaken of the Holy Communion. In depending upon the favor of princes he had been forced, even before his appointment as governor, to drink deep from the cup of misfortune. However praiseworthy the

King's selection of this fifty-three years old soldier of fortune for service in the company might have been from motives of humanity, his choice could scarcely have been looked upon by hard-headed business men with anything but misgivings.[47]

The *Fortuna* arrived at St. Thomas on October 13, 1684, after a voyage of about nine weeks.[48] At Nevis Milan called on October 6 to pay his respects to Governor Stapleton and to receive the latter's "instructions." Sir William seems to have availed himself of the opportunity to accompany Milan and to witness Adolph Esmit's final disgrace. Esmit handed over the reins of office without delay or resistance. He also handed over a treasury so empty that when the English were ready to depart, after having been entertained for ten days, the money needed for the purchase of parting gifts for the English dignitaries had to be borrowed by the government from a planter. What was worst of all, Esmit handed over to Milan an island that had become an outlaw among its more reputable neighbors. This was shown clearly enough two months before the latter's arrival, when, on May 22, a Spanish captain, Antonio Martino, landed and carried fifty-six slaves off to Hispaniola or Haiti. Lieutenant Heins had been sent over with two planters to demand the return of the loot, but without success.[49]

That Esmit had been prepared for the present contingency there could be no doubt. The gold, silver, and other property that he was able to scrape together had been sent to the Dutch island of St. Eustatius, whence they were to be shipped to Flushing. Although Milan had been instructed only to secure the persons of Esmit and his family and to have them sent to Copenhagen, he took it upon himself to try to secure the latter's property as well, by sending Niels Lassen to Governor Houtcoper of St. Eustatius with an alleged copy of his instructions and a demand for the delivery of the goods. But neither this nor subsequent attempts availed the crafty governor. Instead of

[47] In *Personalhistorisk Tidskrift*, 3 R. 2 B. (Kjöbenhavn, 1893) 102 *et seq.* F. Krarup has given an admirable and exhaustive account of Milan's early life, which has been followed in the preceding paragraphs.

[48] *Ibid.*, 6.

[49] *Ibid.*, 7.

seeking redress through diplomatic channels, as his masters expected him to do, he authorized Captain Delicaet to take the company's ship *Charlotte Amalia*, find the skipper who had transported the goods and make his ship lawful prize.[50] It was to avoid just this sort of complication that Esmit had been displaced. But Milan was an exponent of direct action, he sought advice from none, and the council dared not oppose his will.

Instead of sending his deposed predecessor back to Copenhagen to answer for his stewardship over the company's affairs, and to act as defendant in a suit brought by his brother Nicholas, he clapped him into confinement, first keeping him at the fort as his guest, but later putting him in a prison cell.[51] Madame Esmit had rightly decided that she could be more useful in Copenhagen than in St. Thomas, and had started on her journey before Milan arrived. By this time matters had grown rather beyond her power of control, despite all her influential friends and her genius for intrigue; so she confined herself to taking measures to save what she could of the family property. She returned to St. Thomas in December to share the hardships of prison life with her husband.

The story of how Governor Milan, his sick body racked with fever almost from the first, restlessly suspicious and ofttimes with reason of his fellow men, jealous of his official power and position, administered the affairs of St. Thomas during his sixteen months' incumbency may be dealt with rather briefly. In Captain Meyer's attempt to provide the *Fortuna* with a good return cargo the governor took but an indifferent interest, and as to the Esmits' returning on the *Fortuna*, he would have none of it. Just why he should deliberately keep with him persons who could not but be a source of trouble as long as they were near, is difficult to explain on other grounds than cupidity. Milan had been unable to lay his hands on Esmit's gains. In his relations with his council, he showed his arbitrariness and wilfulness. In place of Lieutenant Heins, who happened to be absent on the company's business when Milan arrived, the

[50] *Personalhistorisk Tidskrift*, 3 R. 2 B., 9. The skipper's name was Jochum Samuelsen.

[51] Esmit to Gyldensparre (September 23, 1686). *A. E., 1682–89.*

governor promptly appointed his son, Felix.[52] Instead of selecting permanent councilors from among the planters as he had been instructed to do under certain specified conditions, he put in now one, now another, until fourteen planters had taken part in the government with him.[53]

With the other planters Milan was equally whimsical. For trifling misdemeanors he instituted elaborate investigations and meted out extravagant fines and punishments where a wiser man would have overlooked the whole matter.[54] Offending negroes were made to feel the pressure of the governor's heavy hand. A runaway who might have been mercifully beheaded was impaled alive on a sharpened stick to die in horrible agony.[55] Another negro, arrested on a similar charge, had his foot cut off, after which he was confiscated to the governor's use and put to work in his kitchen.

When in the spring following the departure of the *Fortuna* (on March 31, 1685), Milan got wind of what he at once suspected to be a nefarious plot against his life, he vented his fury upon the unfortunate persons with swift and fiendish vengeance.[56] In the midst of charges and counter-charges, one fact stood out with a clearness that was unmistakable. Milan's stewardship of his own plantation property was above reproach; seventy negroes remained on the plantation even after twenty-five had been returned to an Englishman from whom they had been forcibly seized.[57] Here prosperity was rife.

In Copenhagen Captain Meyer's arrival was naturally awaited with a good deal of interest, even anxiety. The captain's report when he arrived on June 10, 1685, without Adolph Esmit, and even without a word from Milan, gave the directors and shareholders food for thought. Although they had only the captain's unsupported word, the small cargo and Milan's silence could not but rouse their fears that something was

[52] Krarup, *Milan*, 9.
[53] *Ibid.*, 10.
[54] *Ibid.*, 12, 23, 26, 36.
[55] *Ibid.*, 22, 23.
[56] *Ibid.*, 23–26.
[57] *Ibid.*, 38.

seriously wrong at St. Thomas. A meeting of the Company's shareholders was held within two days, and it was decided that the situation was serious enough to justify sending a memorial to the king asking once more for the loan of the *Fortuna*, and for the sending thence of a commissioner with power to settle all the difficulties. They suggested an attorney or *fiscal* in the navy department, Michael (*Mikkel*) Mikkelsen.[58] The king could do nothing but fall in with the company's recommendations.

Commissioner Mikkelsen, armed with full power, left Copenhagen on the *Fortuna* October 15, 1685, touched at Nevis on February 19 to get the latest St. Thomas advices, and arrived at his destination on February 24, 1686. The governor's son, Ferdinand, had already sent his father a warning from Copenhagen that it was planned to send out a new governor, namely, Captain Meyer, whom the governor had blamed for most of his misfortunes, even his illness. Milan, whose nerves had scarcely recovered from the shock of the "conspiracy," called the planters together in the "German" (Dutch Reformed?) church. There he informed them of this last "conspiracy," namely, the attempt to place this "rascal" Mikkelsen in the governor's seat "when he ought to be hanged to the highest tree."[59] He counselled resistance, exhorted their aid, and by cajolings and threats secured their signatures to a document by which they pledged themselves to leave the land before they would see their governor leave them.

But if he proposed to give battle, he must needs secure the sinews of war. He chose a method consistent with his nature. On February 17, 1686, just as the royal commissioner was approaching the West Indian waters, the governor authorized Captain Daniel Moy to take the company's ship, *Charlotte Amalia*, and cruise upon the Spaniards wherever they might be found. With a ship scarcely seaworthy, provided with a crew of thirty men, Captain Moy put to sea to make war upon the kingdom of Spain. The *Charlotte Amalia* had no difficulty in finding a Spanish ship on the Porto Rico coast, but the latter vessel had the temerity to answer Captain Moy's fire, wounding

[58] *Mariager MS.*, 49, 50.
[59] Krarup, *Milan*, 27.

one man, killing another, and forcing the valiant captain to beat a hasty retreat to St. Thomas. It was withal an inglorious ending to a sorry enterprise, and not calculated to redeem the good name of the island.[60]

The commissioners had arrived in the harbor before the news of the "reprisal" fiasco could reach the governor, and before his "valet," Moses Caille, could return from the French islands, whence he had been sent by the desperate governor in search of help.[61] Sitting in his private room and surrounded by all manner of firearms, the governor drew the parley out for three days before he finally surrendered to the king's representative. Mikkelsen's intimation that Milan's attitude rendered him liable to the charge of rebellion, combined with the fact that the men on whom he could depend were rapidly diminishing in number, brought the governor to his knees. A guard consisting of twelve men from the *Fortuna* and twelve planters, all under the command of Christopher Heins, was placed at the fort. With his removal to the ship the reign of Gabriel Milan came to a sudden end. Adolph Esmit and his wife, Charity, likewise the company's merchant, Niels Lassen, who had been in prison since April 30, were taken out of their dungeons and put on board ship. The scene of interest, as far as the company is concerned, was soon to shift to Copenhagen. Nicholas Esmit had already lost his reason while in a Copenhagen prison waiting for a chance to clear himself and to bring action against his brother. The two successors of Nicholas were now to be given a chance to defend their official actions in the Danish courts and before the directors of the company.

Commissioner Mikkelsen was employed from March until July with collecting evidence from the planters concerning Milan's conduct. A few extracts from a letter written by the official reporter, Andrew Brock, to director Albert Gyldensparre on June 30, 1686, just before the *Fortuna* sailed, will give an idea of the proceedings. "I wish for my part that your Excellency could have been here a single day and heard what

[60] Krarup, *Milan*, 29.

[61] Caille's mission appears to have borne no fruit beyond arousing the Spaniards.

thundering there has been in the commission, with howling, shouting, and screaming, one against the other, and I had to write it into the protocol just as fast [as they spoke] . . . but God be thanked it is over, and former Lieutenant Christopher Heins was yesterday made governor and vice commandant here. May God in heaven aid him to carry on his government better than his predecessors, which I expect him to do, as he has shown himself only as an honest and upright man. . . ." [62]

Milan himself dictated a letter to the directors in justification of his conduct in which he vented his wrath on those inhabitants and employees who had attested to his zeal and faithfulness, but were now shouting, Crucify him, crucify him! The letters of the two prisoners, Esmit and Lassen, which were sent over at the same time, bore out on the whole the testimony of the planters, whose sympathies were on the side of those two victims of Milan's wrath.[63]

Mikkelsen left St. Thomas with his rather uncongenial company on July 5, and did not arrive in Copenhagen until October 12, 1686. Besides the two governors with their families and negro servants, the list of passengers included Niels Lassen, Gerhart Philipsen, and John Lorentz, whose testimony was desired in the suits. A commission was appointed within a week to try the case against Milan, but delays in getting the tangled evidence straightened prevented a decision being reached before November 17, 1687. An appeal to the Supreme Court brought further delays, but finally the case was opened on February 14, 1689. The judges rendered their individual opinions on March 14, and judgment was finally pronounced on March 21. The sentence was not a surprise to those who had followed the case. After a fair, impartial trial Gabriel Milan was found guilty and condemned to lose his property, honor, and life, and his head and hand were to be put upon a stake.[64] A royal pardon saved him from the last grim disgrace,[65] and at

[62] *B. & D., 1683–89.*

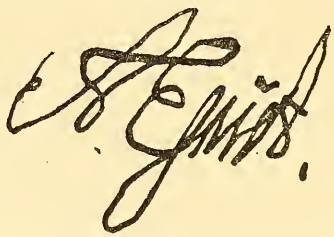
[63] Esmit to Directors; Lassen to same (March 13, 1686). *A. E., 1682–89.*

[64] Krarup, *Milan*, 47.

[65] Queen Charlotte Amalia had earlier befriended Madame Milan, and was one of the "chief participants" in the company. She had helped to mitigate

dawn on March 26, 1689, he was beheaded on the New Square (*Nytorv*) in Copenhagen.

Adolph Esmit's long imprisonment both on St. Thomas and in Copenhagen in 1686 and 1687 had given him grounds for appearing as the injured party, and for demanding some form of restitution. While the Milan trial was dragging slowly on, the former governor and his wife seem to have been kept in prison in Copenhagen. From their arrival on October 12, 1686, until March, 1687, when Nicholas' case against his brother was finally ready for trial, they remained in confinement.[66] Here, as in the case of Milan, a commission was appointed,[67] and although a number of petty irregularities and cases of tampering with accounts were found, Adolph Esmit was on November 2,



1687, given a verdict of not guilty. On the same day, the directors of the company actually named him governor of St. Thomas,[68] and a few days later a fleet of three ships, the *Young Tobias*, the *Red Cock* (*Den Röde Hane*) and the *Maria* left Copenhagen for the West Indies. Accompanying Adolph Esmit, and in command of the fleet, was vice-admiral Iver Hoppe who seems to have had secret orders to bring Esmit back with him to Denmark in case he proved intractable. The latter was evidently being given his last chance, but at best it is difficult to see how the directors could have hoped that a spell of confinement could make the leopard change his spots. A report

Commissioner Mikkelsen's instructions, and may have used her good offices here.

[66] Adolph's "brothers-in-law" Steen Andersen Bille and Jürgen Jürgensen gave bonds for his appearance. *A. E., 1682–89* (March 25, 1687).

[67] Jens Juel, Mathias Moth, Muhle and Höyer.

[68] One condition was that he should invest 2,000 *rdl.* within one year after he took possession at St. Thomas.

of the Swedish ambassador at Copenhagen (Anders Leyenclo) dated November 11, 1687, offers an explanation for the strange conduct of the directors:

"Three ships are now lying at anchor here and entirely ready to sail out of the harbor with the first wind. The first of these carries thirty, the second twelve, and the third six pieces, which [ships] those in charge are to take over to St. Thomas in the West Indies, and there install Governor Adolph Smitt [Esmit] who was brought here from thence as a prisoner. He has now been entirely acquitted of the serious charges made against him, but Milan [has been] condemned to lose his life, although the judgment has not yet been carried out. And inasmuch as said Smidt [Esmit] has informed the king of a scheme concerning a Spanish galleon, which is said to have been very heavily laden with silver and stranded not far from St. Thomas some forty years ago, Vice-admiral Hopp[e] is accompanying him with some divers and a lot of machines and implements with the intention of finding the silver. With what success it may be possible to report by the close of next May, especially since January and February, the months when the sea is most calm, are to be used for that purpose. Not only his Majesty, but other private persons, have advanced as much as 20,000 *rdl.* to promote this fishing scheme in the hope of securing a large return." [69]

In the February following, after the two smaller ships had arrived,[70] vice-governor Heins in a letter to the directors explained the circumstances concerning the treasure ship. It lay on the north coast of "Spaniola," he wrote; twenty-six ships and sloops were gathered about the wreck until a royal English ship of fifty-six pieces came there and drove them all away. "We have received news from the English themselves that their captain has employed one hundred and fifty divers, and I think he had made a clean sweep, for many tons of gold had already been taken out." [71] The incident is not without significance, for

[69] *Danske Samlinger*, II R. 5 B., p. 175.

[70] The *Young Tobias* arrived at St. Thomas on January 29, 1688, and the *Red Cock* on February 23. The *Maria* with Esmit and Hoppe arrived a month later (March 24).

[71] C. Heins to directors (February 24, 1688). *B. & D., 1683–89.*

it indicated the king's willingness to jeopardize the interests of the colony by an impossible appointee for the chance of securing precious metal from a galleon wrecked on a Spanish coast.

After his arrival on March 24, 1688, in the leading-strings of vice-admiral Hoppe, it took Adolph Esmit just three months to convince all concerned of his utter incapacity. On June 22, his quarters were moved from the fort to the ship, where they remained until he had finished his last voyage to Denmark. Before the *Maria's* departure, the vice-admiral called the inhabitants together (July 7) and told them that he wished to know if Esmit's statement that he held the affection of all on the island was true. "If you want Adolph Esmit to become governor, speak now while there is yet time," the vice-admiral said. To this the planters all responded as with one voice, "No! if that should happen, we should all leave the land!" When asked concerning vice-governor Heins, they replied that

they asked for no better governor.[72] This time Charity's pulling of wires could not avail, but she pulled at them with her wonted vigor to the last as the directors learned from an intercepted letter to her husband.[73] Thus ended nearly a decade of weary

[72] *B. & D., 1683–89*, Esmit's diary (July 7, 1688). This was finished in another hand, apparently Lorentz's.

[73] See *Appendix E*, p. 303. The case against Adolph Esmit was resumed by the company on his return, but apparently without result, for the ship and goods he had sent to Flushing in 1684 were confiscated before he could get hold of them, so he had nothing to be seized. Early in 1689 he offered the Swedish ambassador in Copenhagen his services in seizing the island of St. Thomas for Sweden without loss of life. Nothing came of it, and on January 25, 1690, the case against him was finally dropped, and he was allowed to go whither he would. He seems to have left Denmark for Courland, after which all trace of him is lost.

administrative turmoil. During this time three governors had been tried and found utterly wanting. Of dividends there had been no thought; the stockholders could count themselves fortunate that the island was still under Danish sovereignty.

It became the business of Christopher Heins to carry out the work with which Adolph Esmit had been charged. Esmit had brought with him a lengthy series of instructions, the carrying out of which came to be left in the steadier hands of his successor, who served the company faithfully and well until his death on October 2, 1689. He was ably seconded by John Lorentz, a young man who had begun his career in St. Thomas as assistant in the company's office, had been in Copenhagen at the Milan and Esmit trials, and had returned with Adolph Esmit in 1688 with a commission as bookkeeper and assistant for the company. The young man was engaged for four years at a salary of 14 *rdl.* per month. Heins' administration [74] was a quiet one if contrasted with the turbulent times when the Esmits and Milan held the fort. There was nothing for the Company to do but mark time until conditions might invite renewed action. As a result of a mandate issued in Esmit's last brief term offering eight years' exemption from taxes to intending settlers from other islands, a few French Huguenot and Dutch planters moved to St. Thomas with their negroes. Louis XIV's revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 was carried out by zealous Jesuits for whom distance did not dim the sense of duty.

Some slight progress in planting was made during these troubled years. Cotton, sugar, tobacco, and indigo were sold by the planters to the Company. Trade with the home country being irregular, considerable petty trade was carried on with the lesser islands, with the French on St. Croix and St. Kitts, with the Dutch on Saba, St. Eustatius and Curaçao. Besides planting, some of the inhabitants, as Captain Delicaet, made a living by fishing turtle, which were particularly numerous in the

Vest. Reg., 1671–99 (January 25, 1690); *Danske Saml.*, II R. 5 B., p. 297 (March 1, 1689); H. Pflug, *den danske Pillegrim*, p. 1174.

[74] Heins' council after Esmit's departure consisted of Henry Irgens, Capt. Delicaet, John de Windt, and John Lorentz.

vicinity of Crab Island. The company had begun before Heins' time to go into the planting business, and managed to secure eighty slaves from one of the Guinea cargoes brought to America by Pauli, the secretary of the Company.[75]

A most significant effort to start the island on the road toward prosperity had been made in 1685, when the Elector of Brandenburg entered into a treaty with the King of Denmark, by which a company organized under his protection and patronage was to be permitted to establish a factory and a plantation at St. Thomas under certain conditions. Occupation had been begun in 1686, and hopes were entertained that the Brandenburg occupation might help put new life into the poor, distracted little colony. The accession of John Lorentz to the post of acting governor in 1696 was the beginning of an official career of notable efficiency which ended with the death of Lorentz in 1702. Although not governor during the entire interval, he never relaxed his interest in the Company's welfare. The connection of John Lorentz with the Danish West India and Guinea Company as its acting head brings to an end what may properly be called its most critical period.

[75] The contract was made October 26, 1686, and the slaves were delivered by Captain Cordt (Cort) May 14, 1687. *C. H.* (May 26, 1687.)

CHAPTER III

THE BRANDENBURGERS AT ST. THOMAS

It will be remembered that in the second war of Louis XIV against the Dutch, which was ended by the treaties of Nimeguen (1678–1679), the Elector of Brandenburg and the King of Denmark-Norway were both allied with the Protestant Netherlands against France and Sweden. Brandenburg, like the other German states, had not yet recovered from the horrors of the Thirty Years' War, and was distinctly to be reckoned among the weaker European states. That it was able to play even a small part in European diplomacy was due in a considerable degree to the energetic and capable government of Frederick William of Hohenzollern, the Great Elector, who was Duke of Prussia as well as Elector of Brandenburg. Sweden's Baltic ambitions, and particularly her possession of Western Pomerania on the south shores of that sea, made her a natural rival of Brandenburg-Prussia. The fact that Sweden was the common enemy of Denmark and Brandenburg would of itself tend to drive the two states into an alliance.

Early in the reign of Frederick William, Brandenburg had attempted, through negotiations first with Denmark, and later with Austria and Spain, to form a company and establish factories in East Indian lands, but without success.[1] During the negotiations in connection with the peace of Nimeguen, she had attempted to secure French support in her efforts to establish a trade in Guinea that would survive the opposition of the Dutch and English companies. Her ambassador in Paris, Meinders, was instructed to try to secure a permanent factory on the Guinea coast. In a letter from Benjamin Raule, at that time director-in-chief for naval affairs (*Oberdirektor in Seesachen*) he was urgently requested to "labor energetically to bring

[1] R. Schück, *Brandenburg-Preussens Kolonial Politik* . . . I, 8 *et seq.*, 48 *et seq.* The attempt was made to buy the Danish factory of Dansborg in 1647. *Ibid.*, 19.

about the sanction [of France] to lands," and be willing to make considerable sacrifices by way of reciprocal trade privileges. The French, however, did not consider Brandenburg trade of sufficient importance to be worth the trouble of a treaty.[2]

The first proposal to establish a Brandenburg African company appears to have been made by Benjamin Raule in December, 1679. It was to this Dutchman, more than to any other one man, that the interest of Brandenburg in Guinea and the West Indies during the last two decades of the seventeenth century is due. Raule was born at Flushing (Vlissingen) in Zeeland, and had become, before the outbreak of war with France, a shipowner on a large scale (*Grossreeder*), and a councilor in the nearby town of Middelburg. In the naval war of 1672 he was practically ruined, and in the war that followed Sweden's invasion of the Mark of Brandenburg he sought to recoup his fortunes by serving the Elector as a privateer. On the conclusion of peace the Elector made him director-in-chief for naval affairs, and in 1681 he became director-general of marine with the rank of colonel. A man of restless activity and bold imagination, he was brimful of schemes for promoting the commerce of Brandenburg-Prussia. At one time it was an East India Company, at another an Iceland company, and now it was a company for trading with the Guinea and Angola coasts in "wax, gold, ivory, grain, blacks, and whatever the coast produces."[3] In June, 1677, before the French had concluded their treaty with the Dutch, he had offered to lead a privateering expedition against the French and another against Spain, the latter for the purpose of securing the equivalent in ships for the subsidies promised by Spain to Brandenburg in a treaty made in 1674. That, he argued, would cause not only the Spaniards, but the entire world to open their eyes in astonishment at the Elector's sea power, and would lead French, Swedes, and Dutch to try to make commercial treaties with him.[4]

[2] Schück, I, 135, 136. Raule had proposed engaging in the Guinea trade and having the Elector participate with him when he was first called to Berlin in 1676. *Ibid.*, 137.

[3] *Ibid.*, II, 89–94.

[4] *Ibid.*, I, 98, 99, 112.

Frederick William I fell in readily enough with Raule's plan. The Peace of Nimeguen prevented any attempt against the French, but the rest of Raule's program was actually attempted in 1680, when two expeditions were sent out, one to Spanish-American waters, and the other to the Guinea coast. As the America-bound fleet of six ships of war and one "Brenner," (fireship?) sailed by Copenhagen and through the Sound in August, 1680, the curious inhabitants never dreamed that they were gazing at the embryo of an imperial German navy that was destined to become in two centuries the dominant naval factor in the Baltic sea.[5] After sending back two vessels with a Spanish prize captured near Ostend, the remaining four vessels proceeded westward.

"About 20th December last," wrote Sir Henry Morgan, deputy governor of Jamaica, to his master early in 1681, "arrived here four small frigates, between sixteen and thirty guns, under the command of four Flushingers, Captain Cornelius Reers, Admiral, belonging to the Duke (*sic*) of Brandenburg, having letters of reprisal against the Spaniard." [6] The failure of the fleet to accomplish more than the capture of a few small prizes was ascribed by the Swedish ambassador at Copenhagen, in a letter written to his government four years after the event,[7] to the fact "that the Elector had no harbor in America, and that therefore the fleet was forced to return with its mission unperformed." This letter was written at the time when the Danish company was at its lowest ebb, and while the negotiations that ended in the Brandenburgers securing a factory site at St. Thomas were in progress. The Guinea expedition from Brandenburg landed in 1680 at Cape Three Points and on May 16, 1681, the Elector's representatives made a treaty with three of the native chiefs.[8] This was followed by the establish-

[5] The fleet was equipped with 165 guns, and had a crew of 519 sailors and 180 soldiers. Schück, I, 114 *et seq.*

[6] *Cal. Col., 1681–85*, No. 13 (January 27, 1681).

[7] *Danske Saml.*, II R. 5 B., p. 145. Report of Leyenclo, October 16, 1685. The letter mentions the report that Denmark would likely cede Crab Island or St. John to the Elector.

[8] Schück, I, 313, and II, 199 (No. 51a). The text of the treaty is quoted in full in Vol. II.

ment in December, 1682, of the first Brandenburg factory, just east of the Dutch station at El Mina, near the former Brandenburg landing place; they named their station "Den Grossen Friedrichsberg." [9]

In February, 1684, they occupied Accada, just to the east of their first factory, and in January, 1685, a place called Taccarary. They lost the latter to the Dutch, the leading traders on this part of the coast, in 1687, and in its place the Brandenburgers took up a station at Tacrama (or *Tacerma*), not far from Cape Three Points, which they named Fort Sophie Louise.

In planning to secure a West Indian factory where they could dispose of the human part of their Guinea cargoes, the Brandenburgers were following the lead of the English, Dutch, French, Swedes, Danes, and Courlanders. Despite threats and acts of violence by the Dutch West India Company against the Brandenburg factors Raule proceeded with his Guinea plans, which he promoted with the help of disaffected shareholders of the Dutch company. Some extracts from Raule's letters to the Elector will show what was transpiring. "John Pedy writes me from Rotterdam," he remarks in 1681 (August 16?) "that the Messrs. Coymans and Van Belle from Holland, who are two of the leading contractors with the Dutch West India Company and deliver to it six thousand slaves annually, have informed him on the quiet that they would be glad to consider entering into a contract with me instead of with the company, provided it would be possible to arrange matters with the Danish crown, so that either we could buy their place St. Thomas or secure full and free permission to bring slaves to the island." Pedy's suggestion prompted Raule to propose bringing the matter before the Danish court. "Pedy and I and our company would be able, I believe," Raule wrote, "with the help of the said Van Belle and Coymans to bring together 40,000 florins, of which we would present half to the Danes on condition that half of the returns [from the capital invested] should go to Copenhagen [apparently in return for the use of St. Thomas], and the other half to Königsberg. I believe that if it were properly inau-

[9] Schück, I, 314 *et seq.* This factory is referred to by Lucas (ii, 68) and others as Fredericksburg.

gurated we would be able to put the scheme through. And the [Dutch] West India Company would thereby be entirely ruined. And we should then be able to send twenty-five ships out from this land each year and develop a very large trade, indeed bring much fine silver to you and marked advantage to your subjects. But everything must be done under the authority of your Electoral Highness and the King. That would promote friendship between you and him. I should very much like to hear the opinion of your Electoral Highness upon the matter." [10]

Four years later, the negotiations with Denmark were taken up in earnest. To Raule and those interested with him it was becoming clearer and clearer that a permanent station in the West Indies was necessary to make the Guinea trade profitable. "Every one knows," wrote Raule to the Elector on October 26, 1685, "that the slave trade is the source of the wealth which the Spaniards bring out of the West Indies, and that whoever knows how to furnish them slaves, will share their wealth. Who can say by how many millions of hard cash the Dutch West India Company has enriched itself in this slave trade!" [11]

Raule had tried in vain during the previous year to buy or lease the French islands of St. Vincent and St. Croix,[12] and he was now ready to take up negotiations with Denmark. Inasmuch as two of the recently appointed governors of the Company at St. Thomas were at that time in custody, and the last appointed, Gabriel Milan, was about to be displaced, the Danish company was likely to favor anything that would promise a regular income for the shareholders.[13] Inquiries were in fact begun in March, 1684, when Raule and von Knyphausen, representing the Berlin and East Friesland shareholders in the new company, were deputed to sound the Danish court and see whether it would permit the establishment on St. Thomas of a few "lodges" and negro stations (*Logen* and *Negereien*) on the

[10] Schück, I, 148.

[11] *Ibid.*, I, 192.

[12] *Ibid.*, I, 192.

[13] Schück's statement (I, 193) that no news had come out of St. Thomas for three years will not hold, though its trade certainly "*lag damals beinahe völlig darnieder.*"

condition of paying to the Danish company two slaves out of each hundred brought in.

In 1685, when Raule betook himself to Copenhagen with instructions from the Elector, negotiations moved rapidly forward. He was to try to purchase or lease St. Thomas, or at least make it accessible to Brandenburg ships, because, as his instructions said, without the slave trade to America the African company cannot make any headway (*nicht emergiren kann*).[14] Jens Juel, the chief director of the Danish company, opposed the Brandenburg plan from the first,[15] so Raule had to work through such other men of influence as chancellor (*Storkansler*) Frederick Ahlefeldt, Count Ulrik Frederick Gyldenlöve, councilors Conrad Bierman and Conrad Reventlow.[16] In an audience granted on October 13, 1685, Raule learned that the king favored a union of the two companies.[17] Shortly thereafter, Raule and Gyldensparre, a director with Juel in the Danish company, conferred at Hadersleben in Schleswig, and prepared a scheme of union [18] based upon the king's expressed desire. It was proposed that the Danes should retain their stations in Guinea (Cape Coast) and the West Indies (Christiansfort on St. Thomas), and the Brandenburgers likewise their Guinea stations of Great Fredericksburg (*Gross-Friedrichsberg*) and Accada; that both groups should share the garrisoning of these stations on equal terms. Cape Coast was to be the African headquarters. A governor-general elected by both companies in common was to reside in Copenhagen, and he was to have the supreme command over the garrisons in those places; an officer known as "chief in commercial matters" was to be selected by the Elector; Calvinists and Lutherans were to have free *exercitium religionis* on St. Thomas, and Catholics and Jews were to be tolerated and allowed to hold private services, provided they permitted no *scandala*. Two

[14] Schück, I, 193. His instructions were dated September 25, 1685.

[15] *Ibid.*, I, 194, note 185.

[16] *Ibid.*, I, 194, note 183. Bierman was created Count von Ehrenschild in 1681.

[17] *Ibid.*, I, 194.

[18] *Ibid.*, 194, 195.

chambers, the one to be in Copenhagen and the other in Emden, each composed of three shareholders, and the whole to be presided over by Raule, were to constitute the governing board. In case of war the colonies should be considered as neutral territory. Private individuals were to be entirely excluded from the colonial trade.

The Elector refused to sanction this scheme of union, and after much trouble, including the bestowal of "gifts" by Raule upon influential persons, a treaty was finally concluded on November 24, 1685, which in effect laid down the terms on which the Brandenburg African Company should be allowed to do business in St. Thomas.[19] As the bulk of the shareholders came from East Friesland and Emden, that city became the business headquarters of the company.[20] Supplemental agreements were made on March 5 [21] and October 2,[22] 1686. The treaty should remain in force for thirty years, reckoning from the time that the first ship with men and materials was sent thither,[23] and might then be renewed by mutual agreement. Sovereignty over St. Thomas and the surrounding islands was to reside in the King of Denmark. The Brandenburgers were to receive a plantation ground of sufficient size to employ two hundred negroes, and this land was to be exempt from taxes during the first three years, reckoning from the time that the first ship with building materials and necessaries arrived in St. Thomas; [24] after that time they were to pay five pounds of tobacco or its equivalent as an annual tax on each hundred square feet of land thus occupied. This loosely drawn provision, which was referred to in the opening paragraphs of both of the supplemental "declarations" of 1686, was to become the pivotal point in the

[19] Schück, I, 197. The text in the original German is given in *ibid.*, II, 257 *et seq.* The Great Elector ratified the treaty on December 19, 1685, and Christian V ratified it on June 5, 1686.

[20] *Ibid.*, I, 174.

[21] See "*Declaration zu dem Vertrage wegen St. Thomas vom 24 November 1685*" in *ibid.*, II, 278–281.

[22] See "*Fernere Declaration . . .*" in *ibid.*, II, 293–295.

[23] *Ibid.*, II, 258 (¶ 3).

[24] *Ibid.*, II, 258, 259 (¶s 2, 5, 6). Schück (I, 197) seems to have confused 3 and 5 in discussing the time from which the 30 year period was to be reckoned.

vexatious troubles that shortly arose between the representatives of the two companies.[25]

On all products exported from St. Thomas, the Brandenburg African Company was to pay the Danish company five per cent. in kind (*in natura*);[26] on slaves imported, one per cent., on those sold or shipped out of the land, two per cent.[27] The contract provided further that all goods coming in or going out were to be subject to a weighing fee of one pound of sugar or its equivalent for each one hundred pounds.[28] Provision was made for the settlement of disputes in which subjects of both states were involved.[29] To the Danes the greatest promise held out by the treaty was contained in the paragraphs dealing with the plantation which they expected the Brandenburgers to establish, and which, with poll taxes, weighing fees, export and import dues, was calculated to yield a moderate return upon the Danish company's capital stock. To the Germans, the Guinea trade was the main consideration; they seem from the first not to have looked upon the plantation idea as anything obligatory for them.[30]

Raule's dream that an investment of 150,000 *Thaler* should be able to yield a million in two or three years [31] was going to be rudely shattered when the application of the treaty was to put to the test his diplomatic ability; and the stubborn obstacle that blocked the way to friendly intercourse was to be the provision which demanded or did not demand the establishment of a plantation, according to the reader's predilections. What the treaty really did was to raise up on St. Thomas a rival to the Danish company which still might deal in slaves if it desired, and which already owned and managed a couple of good-sized plantations. So long as the respective fields of the two companies were not strictly limited by agreement, there would be

[25] For the Company's viewpoint see the directors' instructions to A. Esmit, November 9, 1687. *A. E., 1682–89.*

[26] Schück, II, 259 (¶ 7).

[27] *Ibid.*, II, 260 (¶ 8).

[28] *Ibid.*, II, 260 (¶ 10).

[29] *Ibid.*, II, 261 (¶ 15, ¶ 16, ¶ 17).

[30] *Ibid.*, I, 231.

[31] *Ibid.*, I, 195.

trouble about in proportion to the vitality developed by the two companies. A second and serious occasion for friction lay in the provision which made the Brandenburg company responsible to the Danish company for whatever damage might result from carrying on "a dangerous trade" with foreign nations.[32] This was to protect the Danes against complications from Brandenburg encouragement of privateering. Denmark could ill afford being dragged into trouble with Spain through circumstances over which she had no control.

The first director of the Brandenburg factory at St. Thomas was one Laporte whose knowledge of French and whose business shrewdness made him well suited to his task. He left Emden in August, 1686, on the *Marschall Dörfling*[33] which Captain John Catt had taken out from Pillau in Prussia and passed Elsinore early in June.[34] Captain Catt arrived in St. Thomas via Guinea on November 23. The *Falcon* dropped anchor on the 24th.[35] Meanwhile the *Peace*, Captain Jacob Lambrecht, was sent out with four other vessels,—all of them with Danish passes—to the Guinea coast for slaves. So confident was Raule of success that he had sent out the ships without consulting the shareholders.[36]

Before the *Falcon* had left St. Thomas with its cargo of sugar, cotton, cacao, etc.,[37] the vice-governor, Christopher Heins, had had a disagreement with M. Laporte regarding the payment of export and import duties and the use of the Danish company's scales for weighing the goods shipped in or out by the Brandenburgers.[38] Strict insistence by the Danes on the latter point

[32] Schück, II, 266 (¶ 35).

[33] Also referred to as the "*Feldmarschall Derflinger*," Schück, I, 206; Laporte's name is variously given as La Porte, Delaporte.

[34] *Öresundtoldböger* for 1686.

[35] Heins to directors, January 4, 1687. *B. & D., 1683–89.*

[36] Schück, I, 206.

[37] The cargo as reported by the vice-governor, Heins, was as follows: 64,581 lbs. sugar, 7,250 lbs. cotton, 1,430 lbs. cacao, 1,024 lbs. tobacco, 55 lbs. *confituren* (sweetmeats?), 21 lbs. *Caret* (seaturtle), 20 lbs. "*Bastar-Canel*" (a sort of spice resembling cinnamon), 566 pieces of pockwood, and 220 tons of other wood. Heins to directors, May 26, 1687. *C. H., 1685–89.*

[38] *Ibid.*

gave them a very definite idea of what their neighbors in St. Thomas were doing. The Brandenburgers seem never to have entertained seriously the idea of actually establishing a bona fide plantation. Neither Laporte nor Moses Caille, who acted as deputy director on Laporte's visit to Berlin in 1688, were willing to admit the soundness of the Danish interpretation. On the pretext that they must await instructions from home before taking up plantation ground, they kept the Danish officials in suspense until their impatience was turned into a suspicion that the Brandenburgers were looking for a chance to seize the entire island. The vigor with which the Brandenburg authorities pushed their business in procuring slaves and disposing of them on St. Thomas and the surrounding islands (as St. Eustatius) aroused the fears of the Danes who were receiving next to no assistance from the Company. The fact that the planters became indebted to the Brandenburg company led the Danes to fear that in case of trouble the planters might side with the foreign company.[39]

The persistent annoyances to which the Brandenburgers were subjected led them to attempt the occupation or purchase of neighboring islands. They tried to secure Crab Island, but the Danes laid vigorous claim to it, and the Spaniards sent ships around at intervals to drive off such settlers as they might find there.[40] The Brandenburgers finally did take possession of St. Peter, an appropriately named rocky islet just northwest of St. John, but it was ill adapted to their purposes.[41] Except for the refusal of the English to give up their claims to the island, they might have secured Tobago, near Trinidad, from the Duke of Courland. The negotiations were begun early in 1687, but the duke's rather shady title and the opposition of the Dutch made it impracticable to push the matter to a conclusion at that time.[42]

The death of vice-governor Heins in October, 1689, and the election of John Lorentz to take his place, did not improve the

[39] Heins to Directors, (September 2, 1687). *C. H., 1685–89* (?)
[40] Schück, I, 233.
[41] Heins to Directors (August 20, 1689). *B. & D., 1683–89.*
[42] Schück, I, 207.

position of the Brandenburgers nor the relations between the two companies. Within a fortnight after his election Lorentz issued an order forbidding the Brandenburgers to bring any privateers or prizes into St. Thomas harbor.[43] This was in strict accordance with paragraph 35 of the treaty, [44] and with Denmark's neutral position in the European struggle (War of the Augsburg League or "King William's War") which was just beginning; hence it could not reasonably be objected to; but when on November 7 he issued a mandate forbidding the Danish inhabitants from buying any wares from the Brandenburgers' magazine that could be found in stock at the Danish company's warehouse, and further forbade the payment of debts to the Brandenburgers until the debts to the Company had been satisfied, there was reason for the Brandenburgers to feel apprehensive.[45] The most trifling complaint against the rival company became the subject of solemn investigation by the zealous governor.[46] Laporte naturally looked towards the planters for moral support. They had two representatives in the governor's council and would expect to benefit from the presence of two rival companies on the island. The result was that government and colony were soon divided into two rival camps, each affecting to suspect the worst of the other.

In Copenhagen the administrative tangles of the Company had been partly solved when Milan had been decapitated in March, 1689. From the West Indies the shareholders had received great numbers of complaints and countercharges, but no dividends on their shares. The directors were consequently ready by this time to relieve the Company from further expense and were eager to consider any proposal that could assure it a moderate return on its investment from this time on. On July 27, 1689, a life lease was granted to Nicholas Jansen Arff, by which he secured the right to use Christiansborg, the Danish

[43] *Lorentz's Journal* (October 19, 1689).

[44] Schück, II, 267.

[45] *Lorentz's Journal* (November 7, 1689); *P. B. O., 1683–1728* (November 7, 1689).

[46] *C. B., 1690–1713.* See especially Lorentz's letters to the directors in 1696 and 1697.

"castle" on the Guinea coast, and to carry on the slave trade with the West Indies, on the payment to the Company of a two per cent. duty.[47] This was followed on February 13, 1690, by a contract with a reputable and venturesome Bergen merchant, Councilor of Commerce (*Commerce-Raad*) George Thormöhlen of Möhlenpriis, who leased St. Thomas from the Company for a period of ten years. He was to pay 4,630 *sldl.* each year, which was just four per cent. of the 115,750 *sldl.* capital entered on the books of the Company.[48] By these two contracts the management of both the Guinea and West India ends of the Company's business went into the hands of private proprietors. The result of this experiment will be discussed in a later chapter.

Before the news of these changes could be received at St. Thomas, and before Lorentz had received a request from Thormöhlen to remain at his post until further orders, the vice-governor was preparing to bring the matter of the contested land rental to a definite settlement in the Company's favor, if necessary, by force. He was proceeding according to secret instructions from the directors in Copenhagen.[49] The rental which was calculated upon the current price of tobacco was estimated at 20,000 *rdl.* annually, that is, more than six times the rental fixed in the Thormöhlen contract.[50] If strictly enforced it would spell ruin, which was apparently precisely what was intended.

The efforts of Danish statesmen were at this time applied toward keeping Denmark from becoming involved in the European war. A defensive alliance between Denmark and Sweden was negotiated February, 1690, and a treaty of commerce and navigation for the mutual protection of their trade

[47] *Vest. Reg., 1670–99* (July 27, 1689). The slave trade had been carried on in the few years immediately preceding by ships sailing from Glückstadt. A Portuguese (?) Jew, Moses Joshua Henriques, was appointed factor in Glückstadt for ships sailing to Guinea on April 27, 1686. Arff's ships were to sail from Copenhagen. Rothe, *Rescripter*, II.

[48] *C. B., 1690–1713.* Thormöhlen himself wrote his name *Thor Möhlen.*

[49] *Lorentz's Journ.* (November 24, 1690); directors to Lorentz (December 22, 1691); *C. B., 1690–1713.*

[50] *Ibid.* (December 5, 1691).

was concluded in the following year.[51] In the same year (1691) Denmark made a secret treaty with France in which she agreed to maintain neutrality during the war.[52] Because of Denmark's suspected leaning toward France early in the war Raule had counseled the new Elector, Frederick III, who had succeeded his father at the latter's death in 1688, to make reprisals upon Danish commerce through Zeeland privateers, a proposal which it was found impracticable to carry out.[53] With these and other European complications threatening, the Brandenburg African Company could scarcely be expected to show a flourishing state of prosperity. Between their Dutch neighbors on the Guinea coast and jealous Danish officials at St. Thomas the prospects were far from alluring. In a report sent out from Emden on August 22, 1690, by the two Brandenburg admiralty colleges and Raule,[54] three causes were mentioned as having impeded the prosperity of the Company, namely: the persecutions of the Dutch West India Company,[55] the scant sums of money flowing into the marine department treasury, and the difficulties caused by their Danish hosts at St. Thomas.[56]

On St. Thomas, an atmosphere of suspicion pervaded everything. On the last day of October Lorentz declined an invitation to a banquet given by director-general Laporte, for he felt that it was to be merely a meeting of Laporte's adherents among the planters,—his "creatures." Among those suspected of disloyalty to the Danish company were two members of the gov-

[51] *D. R. H.*, IV, 660, 661. This treaty (with additions made in March, 1693) is notable as being the first instance of an armed neutrality for the protection of neutral commerce.

[52] *Ibid.*

[53] Schück, I, 230.

[54] Raule was discredited for a time following the Great Elector's death, but by 1690 he had regained some of his former influence. The troubled career of Raule and the internal strife that marked the government of the Brandenburg company fall outside of the scope of the present study.

[55] The seizure by the Dutch of the two Guinea factories of Accada and Taccarary was the subject of negotiations from 1690 to 1694, when the arbitrating board awarded the Brandenburg company a substantial sum in damages. Schück, I, 218 *et seq.*

[56] *Ibid.*, I, 231.

ernor's council, Captain Delicaet [57] and Lawrence Westerbaen, the latter a refugee from St. Eustatius. Every remark of these men that might possibly be unfavorably construed was carefully noted by Lorentz in his diary. At a meeting of the council called by the governor with a view to ascertaining how these men stood, Captain Delicaet was quoted as having declared: "It is a difficult matter, for we have to do, not with common people, but with lords and princes." The governor informed him significantly that he would know well enough what was proper to do when the time for the payment approached. Among the planters the governor worked cautiously, drawing the loyal ones among them still more closely to his side. He was fully determined to be prepared "in case any should be inclined to rebellion." [58]

The time limit for the payment of the tax according to Lorentz's calculations was November 23; so on the 24th the latter called the council together again and had an itemized bill prepared for 20,000 *rdl.* 46½ *styvers.* This bill together with a letter was taken by the two professedly loyal councilors [59] to Laporte on November 25. Two days later the director-general came before the council to read his reply in which he stated his reasons for refusing payment. The main argument advanced was that he had no orders from his chiefs to make any such payment.[60] After Laporte's departure the council decided, in view of the expected arrival on any day of three Brandenburg ships,[61] to institute judicial condemnatory proceedings after three days' elapse. Finally, on December 2 (O. S.), 1690, came the day of reckoning, when the vice-governor and his council marched over to the Brandenburg warehouse,

[57] Captain Delicaet, scenting trouble, had left on the day of the banquet. "*Als hat er sich Reversiren mussen innerhalb 14 Tage wiederumb einzustellen; Weile es seine Gewohnheit war, wann etwas wichtiges solte vorgenomen werden da er sich in mitlerweile an seite hielte.*" *Lorentz's Journal* (October 13, 1690).

[58] *Ibid.* (November 14 and 17, 1690).

[59] Thomas Berentsen and the secretary Joachim von Holten. *Ibid.* (November 25, 1690).

[60] *Ibid.* (November 27, 1690).

[61] Raule had sent 3 ships (*Churprincess, Salamander, and Drache*) to Guinea, and 2 (*Churprinz* and *Fuchs*) to St. Thomas. Schück, I, 231 (note 53).

with the Company's smith to break the lock, and a committee of inhabitants, mainly planters, to appraise the condemned goods.[62] On Laporte's refusal to accede to the council's formal demand to open the magazine and after vigorous protests and appeals by the Brandenburgers the doors were forcibly opened and the appraisal begun. Lorentz carefully notes in his journal Laporte's remark to Delicaet and Berentsen that "if they (the Brandenburgers) were as strong in the land as we (the Danes) we should not have done what we did." He quotes this as an evidence of their "good(!) intentions" and of "what they had up their sleeves."[63] By Christmas Eve, two of the Brandenburg warehouses had practically been emptied of all their sugar and cotton.[64] The value was estimated by the director-general at 24,652 pieces-of-eight, remarkable precision, considering that he had refused to send a representative to participate in the weighing.[65]

The seizure was not carried out without a certain danger to the colony. Meetings were held on the quiet at the houses of various planters, and were attended by the Brandenburg officials. At some of these gatherings anti-Company indignation found vent. Thomas Berentsen, one of Lorentz's most trusted councilors, who tried to investigate one of these meetings, found Laporte and all the Brandenburg employees there as well as an English captain from St. Kitts, one "Callehan" and several planters. Laporte himself forced Berentsen out through the door, uttered sundry threats against the Danes and accused him of being one of the demons of the Brandenburgers.[66] The proposal to seize the Brandenburg houses and slaves was considered by the vice-governor and council, but was finally dropped as inexpedient.[67]

Three Brandenburg ships, the frigates *Electoral Prince* and *Salamander*, and a snow arrived in St. Thomas harbor on

[62] Francis (Frans) Martens, Lucas Volckers, Adrian (Ariaen) Sorgeloos, and Jacob Elias. *Lorentz's Journal* (December 2, 1690).

[63] *Ibid.*

[64] *Ibid.* (December 24, 1690).

[65] *Ibid.* (December 2/12, and December 8/18, 1690); Schück, I, 232.

[66] *Lorentz's Journal* (December 19, 1690).

[67] *Ibid.* (December 30, 1690).

March 7, having on board about four hundred men, and provided with a commission to seize French ships.[68] The arrival of the three vessels set numerous rumors afloat concerning their intentions; but their passports had been issued on August 18 preceding, over three months before the seizure of the sugar and cotton, hence any action they might have taken would have been entirely upon the authority of the captains and the St. Thomas officials of their company. As it was, Laporte confined himself to repeating his request for restitution of the confiscated goods and to making an offer of forty marines to supplement the weak garrison at the fort, both of which overtures were firmly but politely declined by Lorentz. The latter even sent in a further claim of his own for the balance of the rental, his estimate falling considerably short of that of the director-general.[69] The vessels left in a little over a month with only a part of the expected cargoes.[70]

Meanwhile a Brandenburg bark had left St. Thomas on January 8 to carry the news of the Danish company's violence to Emden and Berlin.[71] With that the scene of interest shifts from St. Thomas to Copenhagen, whither by June the Brandenburg envoy Falaiseau had betaken himself to demand on behalf of his master the recall of Lorentz and the punishment of the guilty parties.[72] Christian V hastened to send a letter to Lorentz (June 20) asking for an explanation and for the necessary documents. When in September the news came that Lorentz had seized the *Electoral Princess* and her cargo of slaves new force was added to the former complaint, and to persons outside of official circles it began to look as if the Esmit-Milan drama was to be acted over again in a revised version with Laporte in Stapleton's rôle.

The distance and the slowness of communication between the home government and the West Indian factories were bound to

[68] *Lorentz's Journal* (March 7, 1691); *Cal. Col., 1689–92*, No. 1382 (April 3, 1691). A snow is a two-masted, square rigged vessel.

[69] *Ibid.* (March 10 and 17, 1691); Höst (p. 34) says *sixty*.

[70] *Ibid.* (April 10, 1691). *Cf.* Schück (I, 232), who asserts that they had to return empty.

[71] *Ibid.* (January 8, 1691).

[72] Schück, I, 232.

delay final action many months. The problem for the Danish government was no easy one, for it was forced officially to disavow the violence of its representative who had been guilty of nothing worse than carrying out the orders of the Company's directors.[73] The loosely drawn provisions in the treaty of 1685 were the main obstacles to satisfactory settlement. As the Elector's envoy Falaiseau and his colleague expressed it, "if M. Raule had drawn up a clearer contract, he would have spared us considerable trouble, but it is all over now."[74] The exigencies of the war had nevertheless forced the two states to consider a closer alliance, so a temporary settlement of the St. Thomas difficulties was hastily concluded on April 11/21, and ratified by Christian V on April 23 (O. S.), 1692. A supplementary agreement of June 10/20 fixed the mode in which payment should be carried out.[75] It was arranged that the seized goods, the value of which was fixed at 16,000 *rdl.*, should be restored to the Brandenburg company with such other seizures of ships or goods as might have been made thereafter; and that for the next three years the Brandenburg African Company should pay 3,000 *rdl.* annually in lieu of all other sums due or claimed, the sum to be paid yearly to the Danish company through the Hamburg bank.

The difficulties with the Danish authorities at St. Thomas had led the Brandenburg government to make renewed efforts to secure an independent foothold in the West Indies. Again they tried to take possession of Crab Island, but when the Brandenburg party arrived there on December 19, 1692, they found the Danes already on the ground and their *Dannebrog* banner

[73] The close association between government and commercial enterprise in Denmark at this time is indicated in a statement by Hugh Greg, secretary of the English legation in Copenhagen, made in a letter to George Stepney, secretary of the Berlin legation, that "all the ministers here are merchants." *Danske Samlinger*, 2 R. IV, 212. The directors' orders to Lorentz were issued April 9, 1690. *Mariager MS.*, 93.

[74] Falaiseau and Worckum to Frederick III. Schück, I, 233, n. 63 (February 6/16, 1692).

[75] *Ibid.*, II, 398 (No. 137a; *Interims-Vergleich mit Dänemark wegen St. Thomas*); 403 (No. 137b: *Dänische Ratifikation*); 405 (No. 137c: *Neben Rezess zum Interims-Vergleich*).

defiantly waving above them.[76] John Lorentz, who continued in office *ad interim* until the proprietor Thormöhlen could provide a governor, had sent a captain with some men to Crab Island a few days before the Brandenburg bark made its landing. Though Laporte spread rumors threatening forcible seizure of the island, no further serious efforts were made in that direction.[77] The Tobago negotiations were renewed and a treaty made with Duke Frederick Casimir who had only recently married the Elector Frederick's sister, Elizabeth Sophie; but England still refused to give up her claims to the island.[78] St. Eustatius likewise came in for attempts. The French had captured it from the Dutch in 1689, but had been forced in 1690 to surrender it to the English,[79] who in turn delivered it up to the Dutch in 1692.[80] The English were naturally unwilling to give up an island originally belonging to an ally;[81] and of course the Dutch had no desire to surrender their most valuable slave trading factory in the Leeward Islands.

This series of untoward experiences had had depressing effects upon the financial state of the Brandenburg company. At the close of 1691 it was practically bankrupt, so the Elector Frederick decided in the beginning of the following year to reorganize it on the plan of the Dutch East and West India Companies.[82] This was the aim in the *octroi* of February 27,[83] and in the "new *octroi*" granted on September 14/24, 1692. The latter gave the "Brandenburg-African-American Company" the right not only to conclude alliances, but to wage defensive warfare, to make peace, and to privateer against the ships of the Elector's enemies on a payment of ten per cent. of the prize money into his treasury.[84] In a report on the state of the com-

[76] Schück, I, 233. *Dannebrog* is the popular designation for the flag of Denmark.

[77] Lorentz to directors (June 6, 1693). *C. B., 1690–1713.*

[78] Schück, I, 234.

[79] *Cal. Col., 1689–92*, Nos. 65 (April 3, 1689), 1004 (August 3, 1690).

[80] *Ibid.*, No. 2010 (January 14, 1692).

[81] Schück, I, 235. *Cf.* "*Neues Oktroi* . . ." of September 14/24, 1692 (¶4), in Schück, II, 417.

[82] *Ibid.*, I, 236 *et seq.*, II, 385 *et seq.* (No. 135a), 393 *et seq.* (No. 135b).

[83] *Ibid.*, II, 385 *et seq.*

[84] *Ibid.*, II, 416 *et seq.*

pany issued in August, 1692, the resources were found to be 415,944 *rdl.*, 8 *st.*, the liabilities, 333,555 *rdl.*, 4 *st.*, and the cash balance, 82,389 *rdl.*, 4 *st.*[85] Strenuous efforts were made to fulfill the oft disappointed hopes of the stockholders. Six ships were sent out in August, five in December, and three more in 1693 to Guinea and the West Indies. An *asiento* or contract for the delivery of slaves was made with Spain and promised large profits.[86] But the efforts of the Brandenburgers exceeded their available means, dissension reappeared in the ranks of the shareholders, and by 1694 the Company was again in serious straits. The attempt to secure the island of Tortola just northeast from St. John in 1695 was frustrated by the refusal of the English government to guarantee the Brandenburgers possession or to sell the English claims.[87]

By April, 1695, the three-year provisional treaty with Denmark had expired and 9,000 *rdl.* were due the Danish company, whose proprietor Thormöhlen was to be credited with that amount.[88] But the latter had already been forced after a brief and bitter experience to give up the proprietorship. His appointee, Francis Delavigne, had proved a poor substitute for the experienced Lorentz (who replaced him November 22, 1694). Delavigne repeated Lorentz's performance by seizing 9,320 pieces-of-eight, according to the Brandenburg estimate, from the latter company, apparently a forcible collection of the rental dues.[89] They suffered a misfortune for which there was less chance of redress, when a French privateer named Legendre (*dit "le blond"*) swooped down upon the Brandenburg buildings on the night of November 4, robbed the magazine of over 24,000 *rdl.*[90] in cash, and robbed the employees, from the director-general to the humblest, of everything except the shirts to their backs.[91] The injured Brandenburgers were inclined to blame

[85] Schück, II, 407 *et seq.* *st.* = stivers.

[86] *Ibid.*, I, 240.

[87] *Ibid.*, I, 244, 245.

[88] *Ibid.*, I, 245.

[89] Directors to Lorentz (July 24, 1694). *C. B., 1690–1713.*

[90] Schück (I, 251) places the damage at 24,573 pieces-of-eight.

[91] Lorentz to directors (January 17, 1695) *C. B., 1690–1713.* This is beyond a doubt the incident referred to by Labat in his *Nouveaux Voyages aux isles*

Governor Delavigne for failure to keep proper watch. They contented themselves for the time, however, with sending out requests through Delavigne's successor, Lorentz, to the neighboring French governments, asking them to detain the pirate, should he land, and to compel him to give "satisfaction" for his misdeeds.

The negotiations at Copenhagen for the renewal of the three-year lease took place early in 1695 while the Elector was attempting to obtain full title to Tortola. Falaiseau succeeded in securing an extension of a single year, for which the Brandenburg company had to agree to pay 4,000 *rdl.* instead of 3,000, and to furnish surety for the unpaid 9,000. Meantime the two contracting parties were to attempt to come to an agreement on the interpretation, among other things, of the paragraph in the 1685 treaty which dealt with the cultivation of the plantation on St. Thomas. The Danish company reserved the right to take up the trade itself, as well as to permit such others to trade in St. Thomas as might desire to do so.[92]

In November, 1695, the stubborn question was taken up afresh. To assist Falaiseau at Copenhagen the Elector had deputed Laporte who had been ordered to Berlin from St. Thomas and had been made a councilor of marine.[93] The Danish commissioners were Baron Jens Juel who had been director of the Company since 1682, and Mathias Moth, secretary in the foreign office and also director of the Company. These were the men who had counseled Lorentz's violent action and had sent him back as governor on the breakdown of the Thormöhlen proprietorship in 1694, in the face of the fact that the Elector had but two years before insisted on his recall and punishment. Their conviction that the Brandenburg treaty was a mistake had no doubt been much strengthened by their conferences with Lorentz in Copenhagen in 1693 and 1694. Falaiseau in his

d'Amérique (à la Haye, 1724), Vol. II, p. 91, and ascribed to the year 1688. Labat's garbled story has reappeared in many versions, especially in guide books and works of travel.

[92] Resolution by Christian V (April 9, 1695), *C. B., 1690–1713:* Schück, I, 244, 245.

[93] Laporte's place as factor at St. Thomas was taken by Peter (*Pedro*) Van Belle whom Labat (*op. cit.*, II, 286) refers to as "M. Vambel."

letters to the Elector Frederick III described Juel as "a malicious, selfish, violent, passionate, vindictive man," [94] and Moth as "a peevish, obstinate, and passionate man who was governed only by caprice and with whom it was possible to have dealings only in the morning, for from the time that he had had his first glass of wine at luncheon, he was not to be reasoned with the rest of the day." [95] At another time he referred to Moth as "a ferocious beast." With such men as advisors of the Danish king the prospects for the success of the Brandenburg mission were dark indeed. Falaiseau felt that he had scored a victory when he succeeded in having the consideration of the treaty laid before all the ministers, and not before Juel and Moth alone. The Danish commissioners were not particularly modest in their demands. Among other things they asked a yearly rental of 10,000 *rdl.* Frederick III tried in vain to settle the matter with Christian V directly, projects and counter-projects were discussed and cast aside; and so the case dragged on through 1696 and 1697. Meantime the Brandenburg factors were buying condemned prizes when they dared, securing good cargoes now and then from Guinea,[96] and incidentally managing to give Governor Lorentz considerable anxiety. No doubt Lorentz's growing enthusiasm for the resumption of the slave trade by the Danish company helped to confirm the directors in their intention to crowd the Brandenburgers entirely out of St. Thomas.

Unable to conclude a satisfactory treaty the Elector Frederick refused to expend any more perfectly good money on the West Indian factory but left the merchant and his few assistants there to carry on what business they could as best they might. His successor, King Frederick William I,[97] showed his willingness

[94] "*un homme malin et intéressé, violent, emporté, vindicatif.*" Falaiseau (Copenhagen) to Elector, March 20/30, 1697 (quoted in Schück, I, 246).

[95] "*un homme difficile, enteste, passioné, qui ne se gouverne que par caprice et avec qui outre cela on ne peut traitter que le matin, parceque dès qu'il a bue un verre de vin à disné, il n'est pas traitable la reste de la journée.*" Same to same, Nov. 19/29, 1695. Schück, I, 246.

[96] Falaiseau (Copenhagen) to the African company, June 2, 1696, Schück, I, 246.

[97] The Elector Frederick III had been crowned as Frederick I, king in Prussia, in 1701.

to dispose of the African company's interests in 1713, as the War of the Spanish Succession was nearing its close.[98] On the return to Emden of the St. Thomas factor, Sivert Hoesz, in 1714, the rumor was started that he brought with him over 200,000 florins in cash which he had amassed at the Company's expense. He declared under oath that he brought with him only 9,800 *thaler*, his savings during twenty-one years of service. Finally in 1721 the suit against him was settled by the payment of 800 ducats.[99] In 1715, when the thirty-year privilege at St. Thomas had about expired, the assets of the Brandenburgers on the island were estimated at 23,843 *pesos*, which included houses, negroes, goods, and claims.[100] Even these slender resources it proved impossible to rescue, for the Danish claims against the Brandenburgers for rental and other dues amounted by this time to the stately sum of 1,078,229 pieces-of-eight. The Prussian estimate was 90,000 *thaler*, while the Prussian counterclaim for accumulated damages was only 264,959 *thaler*.[101] In 1717 the Dutch West India Company contracted with Brandenburg for the purchase of Gross-Friedrichsberg for 6,000 ducats, and in 1724 Emden was lost from Brandenburg control for a generation to come. Some fruitless negotiations with the Danish court in 1716–1718 brought this strange episode to an inglorious close.[102]

To fix the responsibility for this diplomatic *coup* of the Danish West India and Guinea Company is not difficult. It lay with two directors who had the zealous coöperation of the governor of the colony, and the work was practically completed before 1700. Jens Juel had lived long enough to see the beginning of the Brandenburg decline in the West Indies, and Mathias Moth had witnessed the fulfilment of one of his most cherished ambitions in the abandonment by the Brandenburgers of their West Indian factory. The Brandenburg venture at St. Thomas had

[98] Schück, I, 288, *passim*.

[99] *Ibid.*, I, 295. A ducat was equal to 5/6 *pesos*.

[100] *Ibid.*, I, 301.

[101] *Ibid.*, I, 302.

[102] *Ibid.*, I, 302 (note 66); H. A. Perry, "The Traditions of German Colonization" in *Macmillan's Magazine*, vol. 62, p. 118.

been mercifully permitted to die a lingering and not too painful death, while the Danish colony was preparing for its first period of prosperity, which was to result from Denmark's neutral position during the War of the Spanish Succession.

Before concluding this curious chapter in West Indian history, a quotation from the close-fisted but practical father of Frederick the Great, Frederick William I, may serve to reflect the royal feeling regarding the Guinea-West Indian trade in prosaic but unequivocal terms: [103]

"The resolution which we have previously made shall remain as it was [namely] that we will not divert any more of our means, either in goods or in cash, to this African and American trading business, and from now on, our sole design must be directed toward trying to see in what other ways some profit might be derived by us from the *Establishment* founded in Africa and America by our father and grandfather, and this is our actual opinion, hitherto variously expressed, concerning the abandonment of this business, namely, that we should not indeed give away the said African and American *Commercium* or let it go to the first who will take it,[104] but that we should nevertheless not use any money on it and cause ourselves expense on account of it. So far as the colony on St. Thomas is concerned, it will not be easy from all appearances to come to an agreement with the Danes. . . . As time goes on, it will be advisable eventually to consider how the effects that are still on St. Thomas may be saved before the Danish Company unexpectedly seizes them and claims them for themselves. That we should equip and send two or three ships at our expense to the Guinea coast, as our director-general at Gross-Friederichsberg suggests, is a plan to which we shall never accede."

From 1717, when the dissolution of the Brandenburg African Company was practically complete, until the Danish-Prussian troubles over Schleswig and Holstein began in 1848, the house of Hohenzollern remained without either fleet or colonies. The colonial maritime policy of Emperor William II, himself a

[103] Frederick William I to von Creutz, von Kraut, Walter and Cramer, dated on battlefield before Stralsund, September 8, 1715 (quoted in Schück, I, 301).

[104] *es* primo occupanti *hingeben* . . .

profound admirer of the Great Elector, makes the study of the policy of his distinguished ancestor a subject worthy of sober consideration. The dreams of Benjamin Raule and the Great Elector Frederick William I, have come to a belated and partial fulfilment in the days of Bismarck and of Emperor William II.

CHAPTER IV

THE LEASING OF GUINEA AND ST. THOMAS

"The shareholders of the West India Company on St. Thomas have not had the slightest returns from the capital invested since the Company's establishment because of the many changes of governors and their wretched administration; so they have now resolved to lease the island of St. Thomas to a merchant from Bergen named *Termölen* [Thormöhlen], for 4,000 *rdl.* each year. He is to support the garrison, which is very small and of but little account. . . . The arrangement is to begin this coming June."

In these words did the Swedish ambassador in Copenhagen, Leyenclo, report the low state of the company and the change to the proprietorship of Thormöhlen in a letter dated March 14, 1690.[1] In the year preceding, the company's factory in Guinea had been leased to Nicholas Jansen Arff for a period of eight years.[2] In describing that series of events which ended in the company's reassuming control of St. Thomas in 1694 and of the Guinea station in 1698, some repetition will be risked for the sake of clarity.[3]

Arff was not able actually to take over the Guinea trade until 1690, when on July 22 he sent three ships [4] out of the Sound under Captain George Meyer. After over five months of sailing and the loss of twenty-two men from scurvy, Captain Meyer arrived at Christiansborg on December 31, 1690. The forts were repaired with building materials brought from Denmark, and

[1] Leyenclo to Charles XI. *Danske Samlinger*, 2 R. V. 314.

[2] Arff's grant was dated July 27, 1689, and appears to have given him the Guinea trade for life, but apparently he was limited by some supplementary understanding to the eight-year term. *Vest. Reg., 1671–99* (July 27, 1689).

[3] The paragraph on the Arff venture is based entirely on Hartwig Meyer's account, incorporated into *Mariager MS.*, pp. 82 *et seq.*

[4] These were *Kiöbenhavns Nye Waaben* (*Copenhagen's New Coat-of-arms*), *Gyldenlöves Waaben*, and the galliot *Laurwigen*. *Mariager MS.*, 82.

in March, 1691, the ships returned to Copenhagen, leaving Meyer there as governor. The next ship arrived in July, 1692, took on as much of gold and other Guinea products as it could secure, and left for Denmark in September. Why none of these ships took on slave cargoes for the West Indian market does not appear, for the slave trade was the lessee's avowed aim. During the governorship of Harding Petersen who succeeded Meyer in 1693, the fort at Christiansborg was seized by natives of the Quambu tribe and the inmates were either maltreated or killed.[5] The governor, to whose negligence the capture was ascribed by the company, managed after fearful hardships to escape to the neighboring Dutch fort. This fort, the loss of which would have cost Arff the sum of 71,315 *rdl.*,[6] was "bought" back from the Quambu chief for 3,000 *rdl.* worth of goods in the following year by the merchants Hartwig Meyer, stationed at Christiansborg, and John Trane, factor on board one of the ships.[7] Shortly afterward, during the governorship of Thomas Jacobson, a pirate from Prince's Island [8] attacked the castle and captured and killed many of its defenders including Harding Petersen, the former Danish governor. During the two years just preceding the expiration of Arff's contract (1696 and 1697) only two of his ships visited the coast, and these went mainly for the purpose of bringing his effects at the fort to Europe before he gave back the factory to the company. As a factor in the West Indian slave trade the Arff venture appears to have been negligible. It is probable that a few slaves were sold to foreign companies or to interloping traders.[9]

[5] *Mariager MS.*, p. 84.

[6] By the loss of the fort, Fensman, according to the account books, lost 4,000 *rdl.* (in goods?) and 4,164 *rdl.* in gold.

[7] Two ships sent out from Glückstadt, the *Christiansborg* and the *Gyldenlöves Waaben*, had arrived in December, 1693, and anchored at the Dutch fort during the negotiations. *Mariager MS.*, 85.

[8] A tiny island near the Portuguese island of St. Thomas in the Guinea gulf.

[9] On August 2, 1695, Moses Joshua Henriques, a Jew from Glückstadt, who had petitioned the king for permission to trade with the West Indies and Guinea, asked to have his rights transferred to one Jacob Cohen and his fellow investors. The directors to whom the petition was referred advised against a project that would necessitate outside capital. At the same time they advised the revoking

With such a list of misfortunes at his back there was nothing for Arff to do but give up the Guinea trade. This business which had been precarious enough in time of peace became quite hopeless as an object of individual enterprise during a general European war. It was in the last two years of Arff's contract that Governor Lorentz was sending glowing reports to Copenhagen from St. Thomas regarding the slave cargoes that the Brandenburg company had been securing from its Guinea factory. The directors allowed themselves to be infected by the governor's enthusiasm to the extent of preparing to assume the Guinea trade in earnest when the company was ready to take over the fort or "castle" of Christiansborg.

During this period the Company's attention was naturally mainly directed towards what was hoped would be the dividend paying factory of St. Thomas. With Denmark maintaining a neutral position in the European war, St. Thomas should normally have been a profitable place for neutral trade. But the island had had too many weird experiences to have acquired a dependable commercial character, or to be in a position to reap the hoped for advantages of neutrality. Privateering at its best is sadly demoralizing to legitimate commerce, but when local governments, as that of the French at Petit Goave, issued letters of marque and reprisal to owners of pirate vessels, then the task of distinguishing between pirates and privateers became well-nigh impossible, and lawful commerce suffered in proportion. The plan of leasing St. Thomas for a term of years was not an entirely new one. In a letter written to the Company in 1686 by Commissioner Mikkelsen who in that year had brought Governors Milan and Esmit back to Copenhagen for trial, the commissioner had intimated that he and a few others might be willing to consider paying the Company "a reasonable rental (*Recognissie*) or interest on their capital" if the directors cared "to relinquish their present position and privilege for a few years . . . instead of making a new contract each

of Arff's contract on the ground that he had discontinued the trade. The latter advice does not appear to have been followed. King to Directors, enclosing memorial of August 2 (August 5, 1695), the Directors to king (September 23, 1695). *C. B., 1690–1713.*

year." [10] It was not, however, until the wealthy Bergen merchant George Thormöhlen began to negotiate with the Company, that the proposal to lease St. Thomas was seriously considered.

George Thormöhlen was a man whose enterprise and business genius gave him a distinguished name in commercial circles in the north. Although apparently less sound in his ideas according to present standards, he bears comparison in enterprise and boldness of conception with his distinguished Scotch contemporary, William Paterson. About the time that the Scotchman was bringing about the establishment of the Bank of England, the Scandinavian was seeking permission to found a paper money bank in Norway. Failing in this project at first, he brought the idea up again early in the reign of Frederick IV, but in a modified form, providing for a considerable redemption fund in gold. As it was impossible to raise the required sum the scheme finally fell through.[11] Thormöhlen seems to have been of North German origin, but had lived since 1670 in Bergen, where he had promoted an astonishing variety of manufacturing and commercial ventures including works and factories for the production of salt, soap, woolen products, sailcloth, spikes, copper goods, and gunpowder. He was a prime mover in the establishment of the Bergen Stock Exchange in 1684. At the time that he embarked on the West Indian enterprise he was a vigorous man of about fifty, with a score of active and eventful years before him.[12]

The contract entered into between Thormöhlen and the

[10] Mikkel Mikkelsen to Company (December 8, 1686). *Cf.* Krarup, *Milan* (II), 238. *B. & D., 1683–89*(?).

[11] In 1695 (April 24), Thormöhlen presented to "the commission which met in the palace council chamber" (*Kommissionen i Raadstuen for Slottet*) his proposals for establishing a paper money bank in the district of Nordenfield in Norway and submitted to a searching cross-examination. On December 6, 1697, U. F. Gyldenlöve, Stadtholder in Norway, expressed himself as entirely opposed to the paper money idea. *Protocol over Kommissionen i Raadstuen for Slottet*, 2 B (April 24, 1695); *ibid.*, 4 B. (December 6, 1697); *ibid.* (December 9, 1699); E. Holm, *Danmark-Norges Indre Hist.*, II, 403.

[12] For a brief biographical sketch, see C. F. Bricka, *Dansk Biographisk Lexikon*, v. 17, p. 278.

Company was signed February 13, 1690. Thormöhlen contracted to lease the island of St. Thomas and the surrounding islands for a term of ten years; but the Company was to have the privilege of resuming the trade at the end of three years, when he likewise might abrogate the lease (¶12) if he did not care to continue the arrangement. The annual rental was to be 4,630 *sldl.* (3,086 *rdl.* 64 *sk.*), which was four per cent. of an estimated capitalization of 115,750 *sldl.* (77,166 *rdl.* 64 *sk.*).[13] The contract was to become effective on June 11, 1690. The first payment was to become due on that date if he took possession of the land by that time, or if not, then immediately after receipt of the news that he had taken possession. He was to take charge of all the Company's property, including fort, plantations, negroes, and magazines, which he was to deliver back in the condition or number that he found them. He was on the whole to be allowed the same privileges in disposing of his goods, entering his ships and the like, that the Company had enjoyed. If he took any of the surrounding islands into possession the Company was to have the right of buying them from him at double their cost to him. Failure to pay the rental promptly would make the contract void. It was understood that any dues received from the Brandenburg company should be applied to Thormöhlen's account.[14]

Thormöhlen's orders to vice-governor Lorentz, whom he requested to continue in office until a successor could be named, did not reach St. Thomas until January 29, 1691,[15] and the actual transfer of authority took place on February 7, just after the Candlemas holiday. In the contract with the Company the proprietor had agreed to maintain as many soldiers at the fort as had the Company; but he met his first rebuff when he attempted to induce the colonists to share in bearing the burden of defence. In this, as in his efforts to raise the duties on outgoing goods from five to six per cent., he was unable to secure

[13] *C. B., 1690–1713.* See *Appendix M.*, p. 332, for receipts during these years.

[14] Moth to Thormöhlen (August 15, 1693). *C. B., 1690–1713.*

[15] *Lorentz's Journal* (January 29, 1690 *et seq.*). The departure of Thormöhlen's ship had been delayed until September 27, 1690. *Mariager MS.*, 94.

the support of the directors who declared that any increase in taxation was contrary to the agreement and would tend to drive the planters off the island.[16]

It was becoming painfully evident that the demands of the West Indian situation had grown beyond the proprietor's ability to meet them. To Thormöhlen's request for a hundred officers and men at a total cost in wages of 5,110 *rdl.* the directors replied that they did not care how many were sent over, provided he paid the bills. To his plea that "the greatest part of the resources belonging to me and my modest house are sunk in that lease" the directors Juel and Moth turned an unsympathetic ear.[17] Their interest was now directed towards the prospects of being able to satisfy the shareholders with the proceeds expected from the lessee-ship.

Among the passengers on one of the three ships sent out by Thormöhlen in the summer of 1692 was the latter's new appointee to this governorship, Francis Delavigne, who arrived on September 17.[18] Lorentz had no taste for continuing in the service under the new management and handed over the reins of power to Delavigne with a light heart.[19] He described his successor as "a person by the name of Franz de la Wigne who is reported to have been born in Copenhagen, and whose stepfather is said to be the queen's master in languages, namely Visconti."[20] Again an untrained hand was chosen to direct the affairs of this distant colony in a difficult time. Whether Delavigne's zeal for his master could make up for his lack of experience will presently appear. One of the first duties that fell upon his shoulders was the painful one of returning to the Brandenburgers the 16,000 *rdl.* worth of sugar which Lorentz had seized during the previous year and which was already on board ship ready to be taken

[16] Thormöhlen to government and people of St. Thomas (September 1, 1691), *P. B. O., 1683–1728;* Directors to Lorentz (December 22, 1691), Directors' resolution (November 12, 1692), *C. B., 1690–1713.*

[17] Thormöhlen to Directors (November 28, 1691); Directors to Thormöhlen (December 5, 1691); Thormöhlen's reply (December 5, 1691), *C. B., 1690–1713.*

[18] Lorentz to Directors (September 17, 1692), *ibid.* The names of the ships were the *St. Thomas, Madame Thormöhlen,* and *Jægeren* (the *Huntsman*).

[19] *Delavigne papers* (November 25, 1692).

[20] Lorentz to Directors (January 6, 1693), *C. B., 1690–1713.*

home.[21] The governor's chagrin must have been still deeper when he received a copy of the king's order of September 3, 1692, directing Thormöhlen to pay 8,000 of the 16,000 *rdl.*—in case he had not delivered the contested goods to the Brandenburgers already—to Vice-admiral Iver Hoppe. This was by way of restitution for a seizure made by the Brandenburg commissioners at Emden in 1689,[22]—a characteristic seventeenth century mode of "settling" an international dispute. But the king's previous order of June 7, 1692,[23] had already been received and executed.

Delavigne made a poor start when he tried to carry out Thormöhlen's schemes for raising the taxes. His attempts to curry favor with the Brandenburg director-general immediately after his arrival made him an object of suspicion to John Lorentz, who was watching his every move with an eagle eye and reporting his observations to Juel and Moth in Copenhagen. Lorentz was a man worth reckoning with, for he retained a strong hold upon many of the planters and hold-over officials (like the factor, von Holten and assistant, Peter Christensen), and he could no doubt have been of real assistance as an adviser on matters of inter-island trade. Before Lorentz had returned from Copenhagen in the autumn of 1694 to replace Delavigne, the latter had imprisoned and put von Holten in irons, charging him, and apparently on good grounds, with misappropriating funds and juggling accounts.[24] Likewise the assistant Peter Christensen, as a result of the irresponsible talk of a negress,—"a loose heathenish female,"—had been chained to a block in a cell at the fort, and his entire estate condemned "without any judgment, summons or warning." One Engel Huysen had been kept for months "in a dark room, without air, sun or moonshine" because of alleged rebellious action.[25]

[21] The "vexation and chagrin" which this caused sent the governor to bed "with a deathly illness" for seven weeks, according to his own account. Delavigne to Thormöhlen (November 25, 1692). *Delavigne papers.*

[22] Christian V to Iver Hoppe (September 3, 1692). *Vest. Reg., 1670–1699.*

[23] See *Neben-Rezess zum Interims-Vergleich,* June 10/20, 1692 (Schück, *op. cit.,* II, 405–407).

[24] Von Holten, "*Liste paa hvis jeg kommer till kort paa Cassen*" (November 15, 1694). *Delavigne papers.*

[25] Lorentz to Directors (January 17, 1695). *C. B., 1690–1713.*

Thomas Berentsen, an influential planter, had been removed from his lieutenant's post and his place on the council.[26]

Delavigne's relations with the Brandenburgers did not long retain that spirit of mutual confidence which Thormöhlen and the king had imposed upon him as one of his first duties. On Thormöhlen's failure to secure from the Brandenburg company the 3,000 *rdl.* with which he expected to make part of his annual payment for the lease, Delavigne had seized Brandenburg goods to the amount of 9,320 pieces-of-eight.[27] The directors seem in fact to have left the collection of the rental dues from the Brandenburgers to Thormöhlen, who naturally disclaimed all responsibility for the whole Brandenburg matter.[28] Acting upon his master's orders Delavigne had successfully protested against the attempt of the Brandenburgers to lay claim to Crab Island.[29]

While the governor was being kept thoroughly occupied with local problems, the proprietor Thormöhlen was having troubles of his own with the implacable directors of the Company. This difficulty began when the first payment became due in 1692. The situation had even then begun to look dark to Thormöhlen. Brandenburg had negotiated a new treaty with Denmark providing for a rental very much lower than what the directors had insisted on when the Thormöhlen lease had been drawn up, and the latter had not even been consulted in the matter. The king had peremptorily ordered Thormöhlen's governor to deliver up the 16,000 *rdl.* worth of sugar which Lorentz had seized. Although not included, according to Moth's statement, in the inventory of the property taken over by Thormöhlen, the latter had looked upon it as one of his perquisites.[30]

[26] Berentsen to Delavigne (December 18, 1694); Delavigne to Berentsen (February 20, 1695). *Delavigne papers.*

[27] Directors to Lorentz (July 28, 1694). *C. B., 1690–1713.*

[28] Moth to Thormöhlen (August 15, 1693); Thormöhlen to Juel and Moth (February 28, 1694). *Ibid.*

[29] Delavigne had sent Capt. Peter Iversen to Crab Island on December 19, 1694, just two days before the Brandenburg director had sent his frigate, the *Lion*, there with orders to take formal possession. See above, pp. 88, 90. *Delavigne papers, Journ.* (December 17 *et seq.*); Lorentz to Directors (January 6, 1693), *C. B., 1690–1713.*

[30] Moth to Thormöhlen (June 25, 1692); same to same (July 15, 1693). *C. B., 1690–1713.*

By the end of the second year of the contract, the directors began to breathe forth threats as to what the lessee might expect if he failed to make prompt payment of his arrears.[31] Finally in February, 1694, Juel and Moth went to the length of making a formal demand on Thormöhlen through a royally appointed notary public, for categorical answers to the following questions: (1) whether he desired to abide by the contract any longer, and (2) whether he would make immediate payment of the rental for 1693. Failure to render a satisfactory reply on these points was to constitute a breach of contract. In his reply Thormöhlen pointed out that the Brandenburgers had not only been awarded 16,000 *rdl.* "of my effects, which according to the inventory, I should have and hold as long as the contract lasted," but that he had seen nothing of the 3,000 *rdl.* rental dues, in vain search of which he had made a difficult journey.[32]

In March Thormöhlen began to bring suit for damages against the Company, and immediately the directors nominated John Lorentz as governor, giving him the title of "vice commandant in our land St. Thomas in the West Indies." The king confirmed the latter as governor on March 24, and on April 7 issued an order to Delavigne to hand over to Lorentz the command entrusted to him by Thormöhlen.[33] On Lorentz's arrival in St. Thomas with these letters the connection of Thormöhlen with the proprietorship of St. Thomas was entirely severed. It only remained to determine the extent of the damage caused to Thormöhlen by the company, or the reverse. Before the court appointed to investigate his claims [34] Thormöhlen maintained that the damage suffered from Brandenburgers, or from Zeelanders and Hamburgers masquerading under the Brandenburg name, brought his losses up to 76,000 *rdl.*, not counting other

[31] Moth to Thormöhlen (July 1 and 15, 1693). *C. B., 1690–1713.*

[32] Juel and Moth to Thormöhlen (February 26, 1694); Thormöhlen's reply (February 28, 1694). *Ibid.*

[33] Report of Directors' meeting (March 19, 1694), *C. B., 1690–1713;* Christian V's order to Lorentz (March 24, 1694); Christian V's order to Delavigne (April 7, 1694); *Vest. Reg., 1671–99.*

[34] This commission consisted of "his High Excellency," Stadtholder U. F. Gyldenlöve, Reventlow, J. Juel, von Plessen, Moth, von Jessen, and Harboe. *Protokol over Kommissionerne udi Raadstuen . . .* vol. 3 (July 24, 1694).

inconveniences, loss of credit, and the like. Out of 98,875 *rdl.* expended, he had received only 39,341 *rdl.* in return, making a total cash loss of 59,534 *rdl.* The court admitted that he had considerable ground for complaint, and in recommending that the king extend him his good offices, that body called to mind his former enterprises in various lines and held that he might render the state considerable service in the future by remaining in business.[35] Whether Thormöhlen secured any further satisfaction from the Company is doubtful. Though he never recovered from the shock which the West Indian proprietorship and the accidents of war [36] gave his finances, he rose during the reign of Frederick IV (1699–1717) to membership once more on the Board of Trade (1704–1708), and just before his death in 1708 (December 25) he was made a member of the newly established Board of Police and Trade.[37] The leasing of the factories in Guinea and the West Indies had brought profit neither to the lessees nor to the Company's stockholders. If the investors were to enjoy any appreciable returns, it was more likely to come about through the honest efforts of their own trained employees, loyally supported by directors who were willing to repose confidence in them. One great European war was nearing its close; another was to begin after the death of Charles II of Spain in 1700. In the lull between these two great struggles the Danish West India and Guinea Company was to go through a period of internal readjustment that was to enable it, better than in the past war, to reap the advantages of Denmark-Norway's neutral position in any future complications. In this attempt to bring the Company into line with the commercial demands of the age, a chief part was played by the oft-mentioned John Lorentz who, beginning afresh in 1694, gave the Company nearly eight years of continuous and capable service.

[35] *Protokol over Kommissionerne udi Raadstuen* . . . vol. 3 (July 24, 1694.)

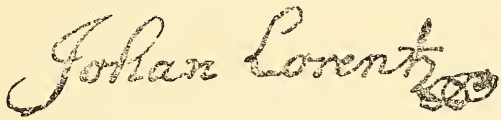
[36] He stated that twelve of his ships had been seized by one or another of the warring factions. O. Nielsen (*op. cit.*, VI, 171), mentions a petition from N. J. Arff, Thormöhlen and W. and N. Edinger, presented in 1697 in which they claim to have lost 500,000 *rdl.* on ships seized during the war.

[37] *Arkiv-Meddel., 1886–88*, 163, 164. The Board of Trade was united with the Police Board by a royal order issued on March 23, 1708. The new Board continued in existence until 1731.

CHAPTER V

THE GOVERNORSHIP OF JOHN LORENTZ

When John Lorentz returned to St. Thomas to replace Delavigne as governor in November, 1694, he had been for ten years a participant in the troubled history of the company and its colony as above related. This young Flensborger, according to Père Labat, had traveled in France, Spain and Italy, and spoke French fluently. He first came over as assistant in the company's office with the irascible Milan. He had humbly done the governor's bidding and bent before his violent wrath, and he managed to survive Milan's administration and to do service as a witness against him in Copenhagen. When Com-



missioner Mikkelsen was sent to St. Thomas to give Adolph Esmit a trial as governor and as loadstone for Spanish treasure, Lorentz returned to his former post to the gratification of the company's directors whom he had impressed as a young man of promise. After Esmit's return to Denmark Lorentz served under vice-governor Heins as the company's bookkeeper. On Heins' death in October, 1689, two deputies from each of the "nations" on the island (Danish, Dutch, French, and possibly German) elected him vice-governor to the great satisfaction of the inhabitants. In 1691 he induced Madame Heins to remain on the island as his wife, and on May fifth and sixth a brilliant wedding was celebrated in the town of Charlotte Amalia, to which the leading planters, Brandenburg functionaries, and French and English captains in the harbor lent distinction by their presence.[1]

[1] *Lorentz's Journal* (March 31, May 5, etc., 1691).

After Thormöhlen had leased the island Lorentz remained in charge until Delavigne's arrival in September, 1692. Even before Lorentz had been displaced, the directors had required him to keep them accurately informed as to the state of Thormöhlen's trade. In the summer of 1693 he returned to Copenhagen to give the directors a verbal report on the St. Thomas situation. About the time that Lorentz was departing for Copenhagen, Joachim von Holten (who was later to become the eighth governor of St. Thomas) wrote a letter to Thormöhlen filled with complaints against Delavigne and assuring Thormöhlen that he had "lost a good servant (*Sorgträger*) in John Lorentz.[2] Whether the letter was written with or without the latter's knowledge may not be said, but it was certainly in line with Lorentz's personal ambitions. Captain Peter Iversen's arrival in Copenhagen that summer with but a small cargo for the proprietor Thormöhlen led to an investigation by the latter which caused him to issue a long list of charges against Governor Delavigne, and to order one George Lorentzen (or Laurentsen), whom he asserted that he had "trained to take charge of the government," to proceed to St. Thomas, place the incumbent under arrest, and assume the vice-governor's position.[3] With another administrative dispute threatening at St. Thomas, and with the directors preparing to bring suit against the proprietor at Copenhagen, it was surely the part of the discreet office-seeker to be on hand where he might fish in the troubled waters. For some unexplained reason the new appointee never took office.

Lorentz assumed charge of the government on November 23, 1694, immediately following his arrival. He had come over by way of the Dutch island of Curaçao whence he had sent the directors a letter telling of the bad conditions reported at St. Thomas.[4] Lorentz, according to his own account, had come

[2] J. von Holten to Thormöhlen (May 25, 1693). *Delavigne papers.*

[3] Thormöhlen's examination of Captain Iversen and "Irnst" Rongel (September 20); Thormöhlen's nine charges against Delavigne (September 25); Thormöhlen's order to George Lorentsen (September 25, 1693). *Ibid.* The latter's name was also spelled *Laurentsen.*

[4] In his letter of January 17, 1695, Lorentz mentions having sent a letter from Curaçao on October 22, 1694. *C. B., 1690–1713.*

not a whit too soon, for the English authorities in the neighboring islands had already forbidden their people from trading with St. Thomas, while the French were designing to remove Delavigne from his fort by force and bring him to the general at Martinique because of alleged high-handed treatment of a French ship in St. Thomas harbor. Lorentz found two of the company's three plantations [5] badly run down, the inhabitants dissatisfied with the government, and the Brandenburgers still smarting under the robbery perpetrated by the "blond" Legendre scarcely three weeks before. He prepared to apply himself immediately to the task of rehabilitating the colony as best he might under the liberal set of instructions with which the directors had furnished him. These instructions deserve some passing notice. With respect to the Brandenburgers (¶ 14) he was to abide by the three-year arrangement made on April 23, 1692, after which he should proceed according to the original treaty of 1685. He was to keep on good terms with all foreign "generals" and governors, assert the company's right to St. John, Passage (a small island just east of Porto Rico), and Crab Islands, resist attacks from without, and prevent rebellion, whether of blacks or whites, from within.

Governor Lorentz was especially urged, by way of keeping on good terms with his neighbors in the West Indies, to have nothing to do with "sea-robbers," though he was to be allowed to buy properly condemned prizes when they might be offered for sale. In his relations with the English, who were becoming more aggressive as the war went on, he was soon to have a chance to show his mettle. The most radical departure from the previous policy, however, came as a result of an offer made by Lorentz himself to the directors. "Inasmuch as he [Lorentz] had undertaken to support himself and all the company's employees and soldiers on the income from the company's plantations and the poll tax," so ran their acceptance of his offer (¶ 8), "we are satisfied on behalf of the company to accept for it such surplus as may be left over, if any there be, leaving it to his honesty and his oath to see that the company may re-

[5] These were known as the "New Quarter plantation," the "Sugar plantation" and "Krumbays plantation."

ceive what is due."[6] In other words, Lorentz was given a free hand to administer the Company's affairs in the West Indies exactly as he saw fit. The concluding paragraph of their instructions gives a still better idea of the new incumbent's latitude of action. "He may do whatever he finds needful for the Company's best interests, provided he immediately notifies the directors; and inasmuch as we have confidence in his reliability and in his desire to promote the Company's welfare in all things, we shall not hold him responsible if he should risk some of the Company's resources and (which may God in his mercy prevent) it should not turn fortunately as was expected. And we shall besides, when the Company gains headway and gets upon its feet, show our appreciation for his faithful service in such a way that he shall see that he is not dealing with ungrateful people. Finally," they concluded by way of a parting benediction, "we will wish him such a measure of success that his good resolution may redound to the service of his Majesty, the prosperity and growth of the Company, and to his own honor and fame."[7]

The success or failure of the West Indian colony was put squarely up to the new governor. The part he played in curbing the efforts of the Brandenburgers and helping to bring about the collapse of their plans for commercial expansion has been discussed in the previous chapter. The perfect unity that had characterized his former relations with directors Juel and Moth continued during the years following his return. In March, 1701, he was able to report to his masters that the Brandenburgers were carrying on little or no trade, having for a long time bought nothing from outside merchants but a few slaves[8]

[6] The original resolutions of the shareholders, passed at their meeting of March 19, was signed by the following directors and shareholders: Jens Juel, P. Bran[d]t, M. Moth, W. Worm, A. Gyldensparre, N. Krag, R. Meier, W. Mule, V. Lerche (Lerke), F. C. Adelaer (Adeler), P. Hiort, P. Lemvig, Nicol. Janson (sic) Arf[f], C. Braem, J. Wurger, J. Kröyer, J. Matisen (for "Hr Canc. Raad Adelaer"), and Frid. and Niels Möller. Resolutions of Directors (March 19, 1694). *C. B., 1690–1713.*

[7] Directors' instructions to Lorentz (March 29, 1694). *C. B., 1690–1713.*

[8] Lorentz and Van Belle had together bought a cargo of 154 slaves from a Zeeland slave ship.

and some "Campeachy" wood. On the island they had no trade except a little in cotton when they made an occasional purchase from a planter. "On the whole, they are quite civil," he reported, "and are waiting for a new treaty."[9] John Lorentz had every reason to be pleased with such a quiescent situation and to pray for its long continuance.

The most numerous nation among the planters of St. Thomas was the Dutch. Inasmuch as the number of prosperous planters largely determined the size of the return cargoes, there was considerable competition among the islands to secure planters of means and induce them to settle permanently. Organized into a militia corps these burghers could become an important factor in defence against outside attack. As early as 1688, when Europe was on the verge of war, Adolph Esmit had offered eight years' exemption from taxes to intending planters. In the years 1690 and 1691 a number of Dutch planters had come from St. Eustatius and Saba to avoid confiscation of their property, especially their negroes, by the French who had just taken possession of the island.[10] During the course of the war, Governor Lorentz took measures to prevent their leaving. As the war closed, and the refugees repeated their desire to go, on the ground that St. Eustatius was a more healthful place to live than St. Thomas (which was admittedly true) he intimated that their real reason was the expiration of the eight years' tax exemption. He tried to induce those leaving to pay the tax for four of the eight years but was unable to prevent five families from going, although one planter, Lucas Beverhoudt, left his plantation on St. Thomas in full working order, to the governor's great joy. Just how many others eventually returned does not appear.[11]

The greatest obstacle to Lorentz's constructive efforts was privateering. Although Brandenburg was ostensibly an enemy

[9] Lorentz to Directors (March 27, 1701). *C. B., 1690–1713.*

[10] Among these were Adrian Rönnels, Lawrence Westerbaen, Adrian Sorgeloos, and John le Ducq (Duq). *Delavigne papers; Lorentz's Journal* (February 11, 1691, *passim*).

[11] Lorentz to Directors (September 6, 1696), *C. B., 1690–1713;* same to same (January 22, 1698), *Gov. C. B., 1694–1700;* same to same (June 20 and 24, 1698), *C. B., 1690–1713.*

of France, its African company's factor in the West Indies bought Spanish and English prizes captured by French privateers whenever opportunity offered.[12] These difficulties reached their height in 1696 when French captains holding commissions from Governor Du Casse of Petit Goave swarmed like birds of prey around the mouth of St. Thomas harbor, seizing not only enemies' ships but vessels belonging to St. Thomas inhabitants.[13] To Governor Lorentz's vigorous protests against these acts of violence towards a friendly power, Du Casse gaily replied that those complained of were rascals, and advised Lorentz to have them hanged when they came to St. Thomas again. Further, Du Casse accused Lorentz of selling passports to Curaçao skippers at 10 *rdl.* each. According to Lorentz's account, the Petit Goave governor bore a particular grudge against the St. Thomas government because of Delavigne's failure to pay him for two kegs of indigo which he claimed were still due him, and he threatened to get Lorentz out of his government "as he had Delavigne." The last thrust probably did not disturb Lorentz, who knew better than Du Casse why Delavigne had been removed. For the Count of Blenacq, "general" at Martinique, the governor had mainly words of praise for the good order he had kept among his privateers.[14]

Although Denmark had not openly sided with Louis XIV, her attitude of neutrality was looked upon as an indication of her friendliness. For the Spaniards who had joined the league against Louis XIV and Sweden it was not difficult to find an excuse for attacking St. Thomas. The report that they were planning an attack upon the island with three thousand men in the summer of 1696 spread consternation among the planters and well-nigh demoralized the population. The planters took

[12] Lorentz to Directors (October 19, 1697); same to same (November 30, 1696), *C. B., 1690–1713.*

[13] Governor Lorentz cites several instances. Benjamin Frank, a Jew, but a Danish subject, had his ship detained and his skipper maltreated and robbed; John de Windt's ship was seized on the way from Curaçao to St. Thomas, the cargo was confiscated and the ship only released on deposit of 5,080 *rdl.* as surety; two inhabitants who had a bill of sale from the Brandenburg factor had their bark seized. Lorentz to Directors (September 6, 1696). *C. B., 1690–1713.*

[14] *Ibid.*

measures for their own protection by sending their families and movable property to Curaçao[15] and some of the Leeward Islands (*"de ofver Eilande"*). The report that the Spaniards had planned to get the negroes' help in turning St. Thomas over to them made the governor take measures to send as many slaves as possible out of the island, especially the most unruly ones.[16] The arrival of the French fleet under Pointis in West Indian waters made the Spaniards retire to Havana, so by November the Danish refugees had begun to return.[17] Lorentz hastened to advise the directors of the company to procure protection for St. Thomas by making representations at Madrid,[18] which advice they promptly followed.[19] But the Spanish plans were only postponed. Fortunately for St. Thomas a squadron of six French men-of-war met the Spanish "Barlovento" fleet [20] when it was reported to be on its way to attack St. Thomas, probably early in 1697. The battle took place in the waters between Porto Rico and San Domingo, with the result that the Spanish vice-admiral, three hundred men, and fifty-four guns were captured by the French and brought into Petit Goave.[21]

While this danger was thus averted by the opportune appearance of a French squadron, an equally serious danger was threatening from another quarter. The Brandenburgers on St. Thomas had been carrying on considerable trade with the French colony at Petit Goave by collusion with the local French authorities who should by right have seized the Brandenburg vessels as belonging to an enemy of their king. At a time when France and England were getting ready to grapple for naval supremacy in West Indian waters it behooved Denmark with her little colony strictly to avoid getting into the mêlée.

[15] Madame Lorentz was among the refugees to Curaçao.

[16] *C. B., 1690–1713.*

[17] *Lorentz's Journal* (November, 1696, *passim*).

[18] Lorentz to Directors (Nov. 30, 1696). *C. B., 1690–1713.*

[19] Directors to Christian V (April 16, 1697). *Ibid.*

[20] The "Armada de Barlovento" was a small fleet that the Spaniards had used for the protection of their mainland and for catching interlopers. The visits of this fleet to Crab Island prevented its permanent occupation by either Danes or English. The fleet at this time consisted of five ships and one small snow. *Cf.* Haring, *Buccaneers*, 109.

[21] Lorentz to Directors (March 17, 1697). *C. B., 1690–1713.*

In January, 1697,[22] the French fleet above referred to left Brest for the West Indies under Jean-Bernard Desjeans, baron de Pointis. At Petit Goave, Pointis was joined by a fleet of privateers under the command of Governor Du Casse and departed in March for Carthagena on the coast of New Granada. After a difficult siege the citadel was captured, and booty estimated to be worth forty million crowns (*écus*) was loaded on the French ships and promptly started for home. The English vice-admiral Nevell had meantime come to the West Indies in search of the French, who were assumed to have gone to some part of the Spanish Main, probably to Porto Bello.[23] It was important to prevent the captured loot from reaching Louis XIV who might be able with it to prolong the war considerably. As soon as a Martinique bark had brought the news of Nevell's presence in Caribbean waters to Petit Goave, the French authorities compelled a Brandenburg captain in the latter harbor, one Arduin, to take on board a French captain, a steersman, and six French seamen and proceed to Carthagena to warn Pointis and Du Casse of Nevell's whereabouts. The French fleet arrived in Brest on August 29 with the loss of but a single ship.

Admiral Nevell was furious when he heard how the warning had been sent and fixed the blame upon the Danish authorities on St. Thomas, who were after all responsible for the government there. He wrote to the surrounding English governments that they should try to break up St. Thomas's trade on the sea, and three privateers from Curaçao and several from Jamaica "were sent out to cruise on this island's vessels, to prevent the carrying on of trade with the French islands."[24] The conclusion of the Peace of Ryswick in September, 1697, helped presently to relieve the tension between St. Thomas and her neighbors.

With the consummation of peace, however, piracy took the place of privateering.[25] During the course of the war it had been

[22] Chevalier, in his *Histoire de la marine française* (Paris, 1902), p. 205, mistakenly places the date at June 7, 1696. Guerin (*Histoire maritime de France*, Paris, 1862) is probably more nearly accurate in placing the date of de Pointis' departure at January 9, 1697 (IV, 69).

[23] *Cal. Col., 1696–97*, No. 824 (March 18, 1697).

[24] Lorentz to Directors (October 19, 1697). *C. B., 1690–1713.*

[25] *Cal. Col., 1697–98*, No. 269 (March 1, 1698) and *passim.*

deemed necessary only to determine whether a prize had been legally condemned by a properly constituted admiralty court before it was offered for sale in a neutral port. After the peace it would be more necessary than ever for skippers to present a clean "bill of health" for ships brought into foreign harbors. The attitude of John Lorentz toward strange craft suspected of irregularities is well illustrated by his action in the case of certain "rovers of the sea" of whom the most notorious is Captain Kidd. Captain Kidd has passed into tradition to such an extent that it may be interesting to see how this arch-pirate of legend impressed people of his own time who had had unusual facilities for studying men of his alleged profession at close range. Kidd appeared before St. Thomas harbor on April 6, 1699 (O. S.?) having lately come from Madagascar in the *Quidah Merchant*, a Genoese vessel of four hundred tons, thirty guns, and eighty men, and having been refused succor by the English at Anguilla.[26] His appearance and action may best be told in Governor Lorentz's own words as he put them down at the time in his carefully kept diary.[27]

"April 6.—Today, Maundy Thursday, there arrived before the harbor an English ship which anchored just outside of cannon range. Presently the captain sent his sloop [boat] ashore with a person on board who came to ask the vice commandant [*i. e.*, Lorentz] whether he might come in free with his ship, which his men had compelled him to seize from the Moors in the East Indies—he could produce proof that he had been compelled to seize it. The vice-commandant answered that if he could produce proof in writing that he was an honest man, he might enter, which message he sent by Lieut. Claus Hansen and Peter Smith [a well-to-do merchant who had been associated with the Brandenburgers in the slave-trade] who, however, were not satisfied with his explanations, for he [Kidd] had re-

[26] *Cal. Col., 1699*, No. 404 (May 18); *cf. Cal. Col., 1689–92*, No. 136 (May 18, 1689), where a letter from council of Nevis to Blathwayt has been dated *1689* instead of 1699.

[27] *Lorentz's Journal* (April 6, 1699, etc.). Lorentz spelled the captain's name *Cidd*. Maundy Thursday: the day preceding Good Friday, Green Thursday. The translation is not close, though reconstructed from very full notes.

quested the vice-commandant to give him protection from the English royal ships, should they seek him here without orders, from which the vice-commandant saw that he was a pirate, and therefore deferred his answer till the morrow.

"April 7.—In the morning the vice-commandant called the council together to consult as to whether or not the said sea-robber's request could be granted; but as he saw that it would produce considerable friction between this land and the English if the pirate were admitted and not delivered up on their request, it was resolved that no word, beyond yesterday's message, should be sent to him.

"A man came ashore . . . with a written request that Kidd receive protection on land until he could send a bark to New England, present his case there, and prove that he was no sea-robber, inasmuch as the governor there, Mylord Bellamont, was the chief owner in the ship in which he sailed out of England three years ago to cruise on the Red Sea for pirates. But his request was flatly refused him, and besides, he was forbidden to send his men ashore again unless they came into the harbor with the ship.

"Long Friday was celebrated in the church today.

"April 8.—Today the pirates lying outside the harbor have twice sent boats ashore at the harbor's point. The vice-commandant at once sent his men there, and they found that seven men had been put ashore who maintained that they were passengers . . . [and proved it]. Two of these secured permission to take a canoe and fetch their baggage, but when they were on the way the ship spread sails and left, the canoe following.

"Watch was kept in the harbor that night by Captain Vinck's boat."

Although Captain Kidd was forced meekly to leave the harbor of St. Thomas in his leaky vessel, and ceases thereupon to have any personal connection with St. Thomas history, the island authorities were presently to concern themselves with part of his cargo,—his "treasure." On leaving St. Thomas, Kidd steered for San Domingo, but instead of risking putting in at Petit Goave, he stopped at the little island of Mona, just off the

southeast coast of Hispaniola, and apparently he anchored later in the mouth of the "River Romano" near "Catherine" island on the same coast.[28] Here he was met—or followed—by traders from Curaçao, Antigua, and St. Thomas, to whom he disposed of a large part of his cargo. According to information given by the St. Thomas trader, Peter Smith, to Nevis officials, one Henry Bolton of Antigua had furnished him with provisions, and had undertaken to act as his agent in getting rid of his cargo. To William Burke,[29] an Irish trader who had recently taken a cargo of slaves from Barbados to Carthagena, and who had done considerable business with the Dutch at Curaçao in his time, Kidd sold one hundred and twenty or one hundred and thirty bales of muslin,[30] and finally, when he had disposed of nearly all of his cargo, he bought a smaller boat (from Bolton?) and left for New York.[31] There he was to attempt to prove his innocence before Lord Bellamont, part owner of the ship in which he had left England, and the admiralty judges.

On Friday, May 27, 1699, about seven weeks after Kidd's departure, Burke came into St. Thomas on an English barkentine, approached Governor Lorentz, and asked the favor of a private interview. With only Madame Lorentz present to act as interpreter, Burke stated that he had been with the searobber Captain "Cidd" and that if the governor would participate with him, a large profit could be got from the said pirate. To this the governor vigorously replied that he would have nothing to do with pirates, and thereby give the land an evil reputation. But if Lorentz was unwilling to receive the stolen goods, the Brandenburg factor, Van Belle, had no such scruples. That very night the searobbers' goods were landed and stored in the Brandenburg warehouse. The guard had informed the governor of the stir in the harbor during the night, so the latter began an investigation on the following day with a view to finding out whether Van Belle had made the investment on his own account or on that of the Brandenburg company.

[28] *Cal. Col., 1699,* No. 616, I (July 7), No. 680, IX (July 10).

[29] Also spelled Bourck, Burch, Burcke.

[30] *Cal. Col., 1699,* No. 616, I (July 7).

[31] *Lands-Protokoller for St. Thomas . . .* 1694–1711 (June 7, 1699).

The governor's prompt measures alarmed the Brandenburg officials. Their bookkeeper, Sivert Hoesz, as well as Burke, came to parley with him in the hope of reaching an agreement. On Monday the governor managed to seize some of the goods which had been brought into the house of an inhabitant.[32] Lorentz, in a letter written July 4, 1699, mentions fifteen small packages and sixty sacks of saltpetre as having been seized and placed in the fort.[33] Perhaps these included the goods referred to. On June 1 Burke was arrested, to be released on June 7, when the suit against him was begun. In the course of the hearing, Burke testified that besides Van Belle, Messrs. Beck and Moyart from Curaçao and some gentlemen on Barbados had a share in the cargo in question,[34] and that he remembered having paid Kidd 12,000 pieces-of-eight. A [Brandenburg?] gunner testified that he had recorded delivery of 158 packages, large and small, into the Brandenburg magazine. The court concluded that Van Belle must have been cognizant of the origin of the goods, and that he should therefore have a protest sent to him, charging him with action prejudicial to the island, that Burke should pay a fine of 300 pieces-of-eight for his *Insolentie*, and deposit 5,000 pieces-of-eight by way of guarantee that Kidd's title to the goods was a legal one.[35]

In his letter to the directors describing the affair, Lorentz mentions their having fined Van Belle 5,000 *rdl.*,[36] which helps to confirm a suspicion that the latter was forced to put up the deposit for Burke, who was only a go-between. The governor refrained from seizing those goods which actually reached the Brandenburg magazine. They were eventually put on board the Brandenburg ship, the *Seven Provinces*, which Lorentz re-

[32] *Lorentz's Journal* (May 27, etc., 1699).

[33] Lorentz to Directors (July 4, 1699). *C. B., 1690–1713.* In a letter of April 15, 1700, Lorentz informed the Directors that he had caused the 69 sacks of saltpetre and 12 bales of cotton and "Netteldug" to be loaded on the *Christian V* on the company's account.

[34] Burke case (June 7, 1699). *Lands-Prot., 1694–1711.*

[35] *Ibid.* The court was composed of the governor and John (Johannes) de Windt, Thomas Berentsen, Claus (Claes) Hansen, J. Rasmussen and Abraham Matheusen, who signed with his mark.

[36] Lorentz to Directors (June 19, 1699). *C. B., 1690–1713.*

ported to be laden with "a deal of searobbers' goods, of pockwood, some cotton and money," for no sugar was to be had.[37] The governor and council considered the case extremely grave. The governor's instructions had expressly prohibited him from having dealings with pirates, but from the point of view of the colony it was just as dangerous for the Brandenburgers to engage in such traffic as for the Danes, for the Company would be held responsible in any case. Councilor Claus Hansen was sent over on the Danish ship *Gyldenlöve*, Captain Vinck, which left St. Thomas on June 20, 1699, provided with documents to prove where the responsibility for collusion with the pirates really lay.[38]

The problem for the Danes in the West Indies was how to convince the English that there was no collusion between them and the pirates. From New York, the Carolinas, and the Bahamas, came complaints from zealous English officials like Edward Randolph against the encouragement given to piracy and to evasion of the acts of navigation.[39] In the West Indies, the Danes and the Dutch were held largely responsible for such wrong-doings, although it was the attitude of the planters that made smuggling practically impossible to repress. The English had made some progress in discouraging piracy when they succeeded in getting Captain Kidd shipped off to England for trial. Local laws did not permit hanging, and conviction by local authorities would have been problematical.[40] Another victory for the forces of order was secured when Bolton was seized and brought to England for trial.[41]

With respect to Burke they were less lucky. Threats of Rear-admiral Benbow, who appeared at St. Thomas in October, 1699, with a ship of fifty-four pieces and two small frigates of twenty or twenty-two guns each, could not make the governor give up Burke, who had sought refuge with the Brandenburgers,

[37] Lorentz to Directors, *Gov. C. B., 1694–1700* (August 10, 1699).

[38] *Lorentz's Journal* (June 20, 1699).

[39] Edward Randolph was Collector of Customs and Deputy Auditor for New England. Beer, *op. cit.*, I, 222.

[40] See, *e. g. Cal. Col., 1701*, No. 180 (February 19).

[41] *Cal. Col., 1699*, No. 1034 (December 4); *ibid., 1701*, No. 26 (January 11).

or surrender the money that Burke (or Van Belle) had deposited in the Company's treasury.[42] Instead, Benbow made a report on the island and its harbor, in which he stated that it "would be of great use to our English nation in case of war in these parts," that it could be easily fortified, whereas at present it was but "a receptacle for thieves." [43] The stubbornness of Lorentz, whose main concern was the retention of the five thousand pieces-of-eight and the seized goods for the Company, led the Earl of Bellamont, the English governor of New York, to contend that Burke had bought protection from the Danish governor with the proceeds of Kidd's spoils.[44] His statement that Burke "will not be parted with" turned out entirely true, for in August, 1701, that pirates' friend was reported out of reach of the arm of English law in the French part of St. Kitts.[45] Lorentz was able to assume so bold a front because he knew through information secured by Peter Smith on Nevis that Admiral Benbow was merely putting up a bluffing game, and was exceeding his orders in the hope of forcing the restitution of Kidd's and Burke's boat.[46]

In July, 1699, another Madagascar pirate, Tempest Roger (or Rogers) a former acquaintance of Kidd's from those regions, appeared in St. Thomas harbor to ask leave to repair his ship, but he was not allowed to remain.[47] But pirates did not always get off so easily. In a letter written in April, 1700, Lorentz mentions having meted out exemplary punishment to four out of nine pirates "who came here some time ago," leaving the fate of the remaining five in the hands of the directors.[48] Their confiscated goods, amounting to 2,600 *rdl.*, helped to justify his zeal for the interests of his masters and make the performance of duty doubly joyous.

[42] Lorentz to Directors (November 9, 1699). *Gov. C. B., 1694–1700; Cal. Col., 1699*, No. 907 (October 28).

[43] Benbow to Vernon, *Cal. Col., 1699*, No. 907 (October 28).

[44] Bellamont to Lords of Trade, *ibid.*, No. 890 (October 23, 1699).

[45] Codrington (Antigua) to Council of Trade, *ibid., 1701*, No. 784 (August 25).

[46] Lorentz to Directors (November 9, 1699). *Gov. C. B., 1694–1700.*

[47] Same to same, *ibid.* (August 10, 1699); *Cal. Col., 1699*, No. 880, II (August 17, etc.); *ibid., 1700*, No. 848 (October 18).

[48] Lorentz to Directors (April 15, 1700). *C. B., 1690–1713.*

The willingness of the Brandenburg factor to encourage unlawful commerce did not escape the English Leeward Islands governors. In September, 1698, Van Belle attempted to send two score slaves to St. Kitts in a boat flying a Danish flag, but a Mr. Mead, the English commissioner and collector of customs at Nevis, seized them, apparently on the basis of the first clause of the Act of Navigation, which provided that "no goods or commodities whatsoever shall be imported into or exported out of any of his Majesty's plantations except in English or Plantation shipping, and manned as specified in the Act." The Council of Trade and Plantations were not disposed to intervene in Van Belle's behalf, since they had "rather much reason to suspect him well versed in methods of interloping and trading there illegally, a practice very prejudicial to [British] service and interests." [49]

From the various circumstances above related it will be seen that the governor's position at St. Thomas was not a sinecure. He must stand ready to assert the claims of King and Company against all comers. In 1698 the governor sent an expedition to Crab Island to protest against its occupation by that Scotch Darien company promoted by William Paterson, an enterprise through which the sponsors hoped to revolutionize Caribbean commerce.[50] The conscientious governor must discriminate between legal and illegal commerce, he must permit the Brandenburgers a certain stipulated freedom in trade without endangering Danish sovereignty on the island. He must keep on good terms with the planters, prevent uprisings among the

[49] Peter Vanbelle (Van Belle) to king. *Cal. Col., 1699,* No. 648, I (July 13); Council of Trade and Plantations to Earl of Jersey, *ibid.,* No. 685 (July 27).

[50] Lorentz to Directors (October 12, 1698), *Gov. C. B., 1694–1700; Cal. Col., 1699,* No. 866 (October 16): Höst, *op. cit.,* 40 *et seq.,* gives Lorentz's protest to Captain Robert Pinkerton, of October 2, 1698, and extracts from Lieut. Claus Hansen's Journal of the Danish expedition to Crab Island. It is curious to note that as early as October 15/25, 1688, four "English (*sic*) merchants" had applied to the Elector of Brandenburg for an *octroi* for a new "American Company." The names given by Walter (Schück, II, 528) are Heinrich Bulen, Wilhelm Pocock, William Paterson, and James Schmitten. The only one of these who is mentioned in the act of Parliament of June 26, 1695, incorporating the Darien Company, is Paterson. For James *Smith* see p. 189 above.

negroes, and maintain good relations with the neighboring governments. He must see to it that the Company's plantations and magazine pay a surplus above their expenses, and particularly that homeward-bound ships of the Company have a good cargo that will enable the shareholders to secure dividends on their investment. That even as capable a man as John Lorentz should be successful in all these respects was quite impossible, but that he should be able to hold his position until his death, and retain possession of the island against the threats of Spaniards and English, is something for which he deserves no little credit.

Lorentz was always alive to what he considered the Company's best interests. His prompt report of John Mathew Leers' attempt to lease the island in 1695 helped to nip that proposal in the bud, for he wrote that the rumor had "caused considerable grumbling among the inhabitants, who had all sworn to leave the land if it were leased out again." [51] His letters concerning the lucrativeness of the slave trade led the shareholders of the Company to undertake with Jacob Lerke the sending of a ship to Guinea for a cargo of slaves, and eventually brought the Company into the business on its own account.[52]

On June 10, 1702, Governor John Lorentz died in office, the first governor save one to obtain that distinction.[53] Of the sixteen years that had elapsed since he first arrived in St. Thomas as an humble "assistant," he had served the Company eleven years as its governor. Under his clear-headed and vigorous guidance, the Company had been brought from bankruptcy to solvency, and its colony had become firmly established in the Caribbean.

[51] Lorentz to Directors (May 8, 1695), *C. B., 1690–1713.* The Leers' project was supported by the Brandenburgers, who expected to be able to agree with Leers better than with the Danish company. Schück (I, 248, 249) discusses the matter, but is unable from the Brandenburg documents to explain why it was dropped.

[52] *Ibid* (November 30, 1696), *Gov. C. B., 1694–1700.*

[53] Christopher Heins. See above, p. 80.

CHAPTER VI

ST. THOMAS AND ST. JOHN AS PLANTATION COLONIES (1688–1733)

If the importance of the history of the Danish islands in the West Indies is to be judged by the extent of the interests involved, or is to be measured by the actual influence of the islands upon the history of the Caribbean or on the state of Denmark-Norway, the propriety of devoting an entire volume to them might well be questioned. But if a rather detailed study will disclose the rise of a fairly typical plantation society, if it will show on a small scale the sort of thing that took place in West Indian lands in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries on a large scale, such as the rise of the sugar industry and the slave trade, the effort need require no apology. For the islands reflected very distinctly the economic solidarity of the West Indian community at a time when it was looked upon as one of the main sources of the world's wealth.

St. Thomas can scarcely be said to have assumed its place as a regular plantation colony until 1688, when the Company's accounts first began to be kept in money instead of sugar. In that year the first census was taken, and although not a scientific affair, its results are not without interest.[1] This report showed that there were 90 plantations surveyed, and a total white planting population to record of just 148. These were distributed among eleven nationalities as follows: 66 Dutch, 31 English, 17 Danes and Norwegians, 17 French, 4 Irish, 4 Flemish, 3 Germans, 3 Swedes, and one each of Scotch, Brazilians, and Portuguese. Of the 76 adults listed, 56 are entered as planters, 5 as carpenters, 2 as planters and merchants, and one each as minister (Lutheran), schoolmaster, fisher, captain on the

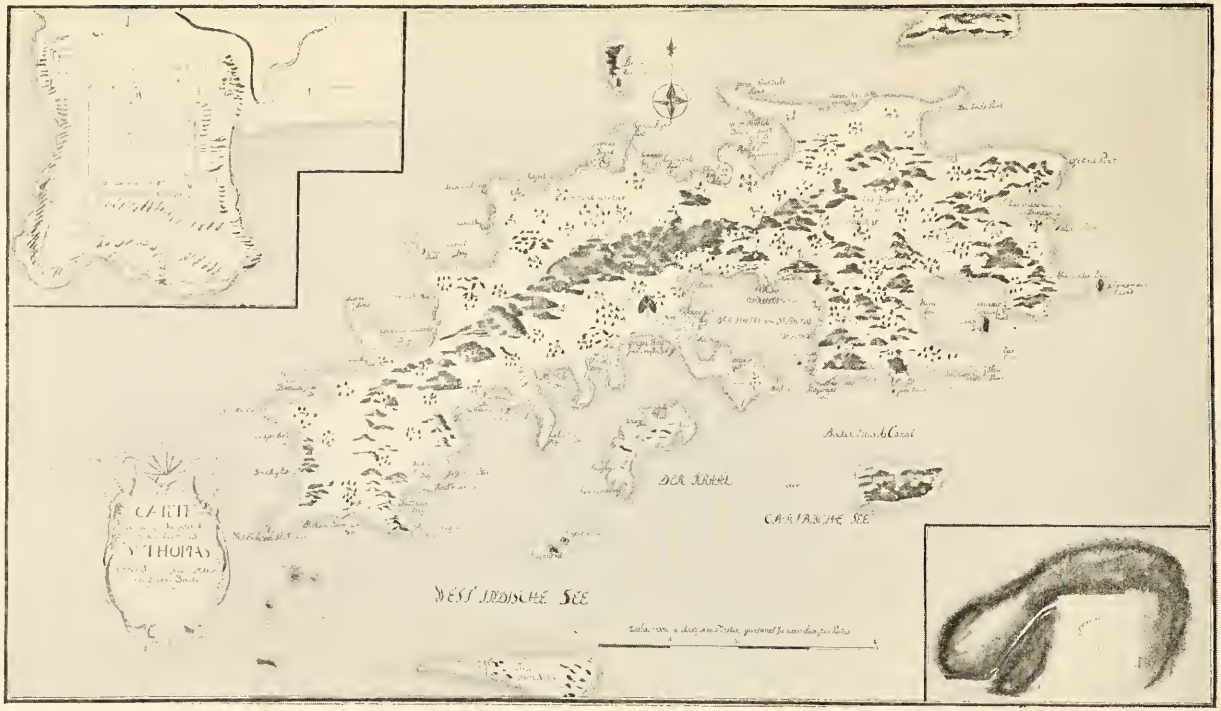
[1] *Land Lister for St. Thomas*, 1688. The figures given in Höst, *op. cit.*, 29, vary slightly from those given here. The report was signed by Franz Martens, who was a member of the council and a tavern keeper, Andreas Brock, who acted as secretary, and Sigmont Lück.

Company's bark, tavern keeper, overseer, turner, planter and tailor, and planter and miller. In the village of Charlotte Amalia,[2] 37 persons were enumerated, of whom 21 were adults (12 men and 9 women), 11 were children, one was an indentured servant, and 4 were negroes. Of the adults, 8 were Dutch, 4 were Danish, 3 were English; there was one each of French, Spanish, and "high German" inhabitants, while the nationality of the remaining three was not recorded. The trades represented in the village and the number in each were: tailor, 2; innkeeper, 1; seamstress, 1; shoemaker, 1; carpenter, 2; blacksmith, 1; and cotton ginner, 1. Among the 21 adults were 10 Calvinists (Reformed), 7 Lutherans (distributed among high Germans, Danes, and Dutch), and 2 Catholics. The number of white men, women, and children in the island totalled 317, and the negroes 422, which latter figure includes one Carib Indian, three squaws, and three mulatto women. In the census taken three years later (1691), just when Thormöhlen's proprietorship began, the information seems to have been gathered with greater precision, especially with regard to the plantations. The increase from 317 whites in 1688 to 399 in 1691 was no doubt partly due to the publication of the edict concerning the eight years' exemption from taxes offered to new settlers, coupled with the outbreak of hostilities in Europe. The number of negroes had risen at a rather more rapid rate, they numbering 555, of whom 361 were put down as "capable," which meant full-grown negroes capable of performing their full quota of work.[3]

It must be borne in mind that despite the voluminous nature of the census records, they are not such as to permit the investigator to claim absolute accuracy for the figures drawn from them. They will, on the whole, give a reasonably accurate idea of the actual state of affairs in many respects; but with regard to the number of slaves, especially in the second decade of the next century and after, when St. Thomas has be-

[2] Charlotte Amalia, the name which the port of St. Thomas still bears, was named in honor of the queen of Christian V, in whose time the town was founded. For present-day view of town, see photo facing p. 257.

[3] One Indian squaw and four children are included in the list of negroes.



MAP OF ST. THOMAS (1715–1733)
(MS. Map, undated, Royal Library, Copenhagen)

[*Facing page 122*]

come the home of a class of capitalist planters, the figures quoted will invariably be lower than they should be. Governor Bredal, writing to the directors in 1718, complained that the plantation owners did not fill out their records concerning the poll and land taxes they were supposed to pay, "but the planters let their negroes hide themselves for the time being in the forest, and only a few of them are to be seen.[4]

By 1691, the number of plantations had increased to one hundred and one. Only twenty-eight of these had been under cultivation for eight years or more, while the average length of time that each of the plantations had been cultivated amounted to just four years, eleven months. The newness of the colony is further seen by the fact that as yet only five plantations were devoted to sugar cane even in part, while on 87 cotton was the chief product. Provisions ("*Cost*" or "*Kaast*"), which included cassava, millet and maize, were raised on nine-tenths of the plantations. Eventually, the negroes were allotted plots of ground on which they raised their own food supply. Indigo culture had been begun. In 1699 Peter Smith was the only person who planted indigo, though others had tried it before him.[5] In their instructions issued to Adolph Esmit in 1687 before his departure for St. Thomas, the directors named cotton, indigo, tobacco, pockwood, and other valuable dye woods as the chief products of the island.

The failure of the inhabitants to plant much sugar was ascribed to their having taken up the "fattest" land from the start, whereas the "poorer" and stonier land was really better suited to the sugar cane. The northern and more fertile slopes were naturally taken up later than the southern and more accessible side. The hope of the directors that rice and vine culture be given a trial seems not to have been justified by experience.[6] In 1689 the governor and council proposed that a

[4] E. Bredal to Directors (March, 1718), *B. & D., 1717–1720.*

[5] The Company had indigo "works" as early as 1688. *Cf.* A. E. Esmit's Journal (June 19, 1688); Lorentz to Directors (February 20, 1699), *C. B., 1694–1700.*

[6] Millet ("Milien," or "Millie,") was used quite commonly for food for the slaves; "tobi" and cacao were also mentioned by the directors as worthy of attention. Directors' instructions to Esmit (November 9, 1687). Heins re-

sugar mill should be put up on Milan's former plantation, and ventured the opinion that if sugar cane should prove successful on the Company's plantations, it would prove more profitable than cotton or tobacco.[7] The main reason for the Company's having hitherto received so scant returns from its investment was explained by the fact that the older islands yielded more sugar than the newly settled.[8] As the area devoted to sugar increased, the culture of tobacco decreased. There was always a good market for the latter in Denmark, however, and tobacco from Porto Rico, Virginia, and other regions frequently found a place in the Company's homeward-bound cargoes.

Sugar and cotton remained the leading products during the period under discussion. The sugar cane was cut by the negroes with a sort of hatchet called *kapmesser*, and carried by them to the mill or "sugar works" with which the greater part of the plantations after 1700 were usually provided.[9] In 1696 Governor Lorentz reported seven sugar mills to be at work producing brown sugar, which was to be sent to Denmark by a ship expected from Copenhagen.[10] By 1715, the number of sugar plantations provided with mills had reached thirty-two out of a total of forty plantations devoted solely to sugar.[11] The motive power was furnished mainly by windmills, though these came gradually to be supplemented by treadmills turned by mule-power. Compared with modern methods the waste was of course tremendous. At least ten negroes were required to keep one such mill running; two, who were called "rollers," feeding the cane stalks between the upright wooden cylinders,

ported a successful trial in growing ginger. Heins to Directors (January 2, 1689), *B. & D., 1683–89*.

[7] Resolutions of governor and council (February 19, 1689). The members of the council were Henry Irgens, Joachim Delicaet, John de Windt, and John Lorentz.

[8] Heins to Directors (August 20, 1689). *B. & D. 1683–89*.

[9] See *Appendix H.*, p. 318.

[10] Lorentz to Directors (November 30, 1696), *C. B., 1690–1714*.

[11] *Land Lister for St. Thomas*, 1715. For description of an eighteenth century sugar mill, see Oxholm, *De danske vestindiske öers Tilstand . . .*, pp. 44 *et seq.*, and J. C. Schmidt, *Blandede Anmærkninger samlede paa og over Ejlandet St. Kroix . . .* (*Samleren*, 1788, 2 B).

others carrying in the fresh stalks and removing the crushed ones. An ax always lay near at hand, with which to amputate the arm of the careless negro whose hand might get caught by the revolving cylinders; for when help was scarce, even three-quarters of a negro was better than none.

The juice of the cane required expert handling, and negroes who were adept at boiling sugar brought fancy prices. As the juice was transferred from one copper kettle to another and larger one, until it had run the gamut of a "battery" of three or four kettles, the foam was removed and used for the distillation of rum. The crystallized sugar was finally "cured" in the coolers in the curing house, and emptied from these into molds. The molasses which was drained off went to the distillery to help make rum. With great, husky blacks cutting cane in the fields, with negro boys leading the loaded mules or asses to the mill, with still others to carry in the stalks and to tend to the crushing, boiling, and distilling, the scene presented during harvest must have been a busy and noisy one indeed.

The cotton plantations were smaller and more numerous than those devoted to sugar. They, too, were usually provided with "works" where the cotton was ginned. The proportion of the number of plantations devoted to the raising of cotton as compared with the entire number fell from eighty per cent. in 1691 to forty-four per cent. in 1715, and rose again to fifty per cent. by 1733. Of the total number of plantations, the part devoted to sugar rose from five per cent. in 1691 to thirty-five per cent. in 1720, falling back to twenty-four per cent. in 1733. The decline shown by the figures for 1733 is due to a series of misfortunes, of which drought, storms, and disasters at sea formed a part.[12]

The cotton production was worth perhaps a third to a fourth as much as the sugar. It is impossible to determine the exact ratio or the exact amount, for the planters frequently refused to sell their produce to the Company, and the *factura* or invoices of the cargoes often include items from neighboring islands.

The "boom" period in early St. Thomas history was the first decade and a half of the eighteenth century, substantially the

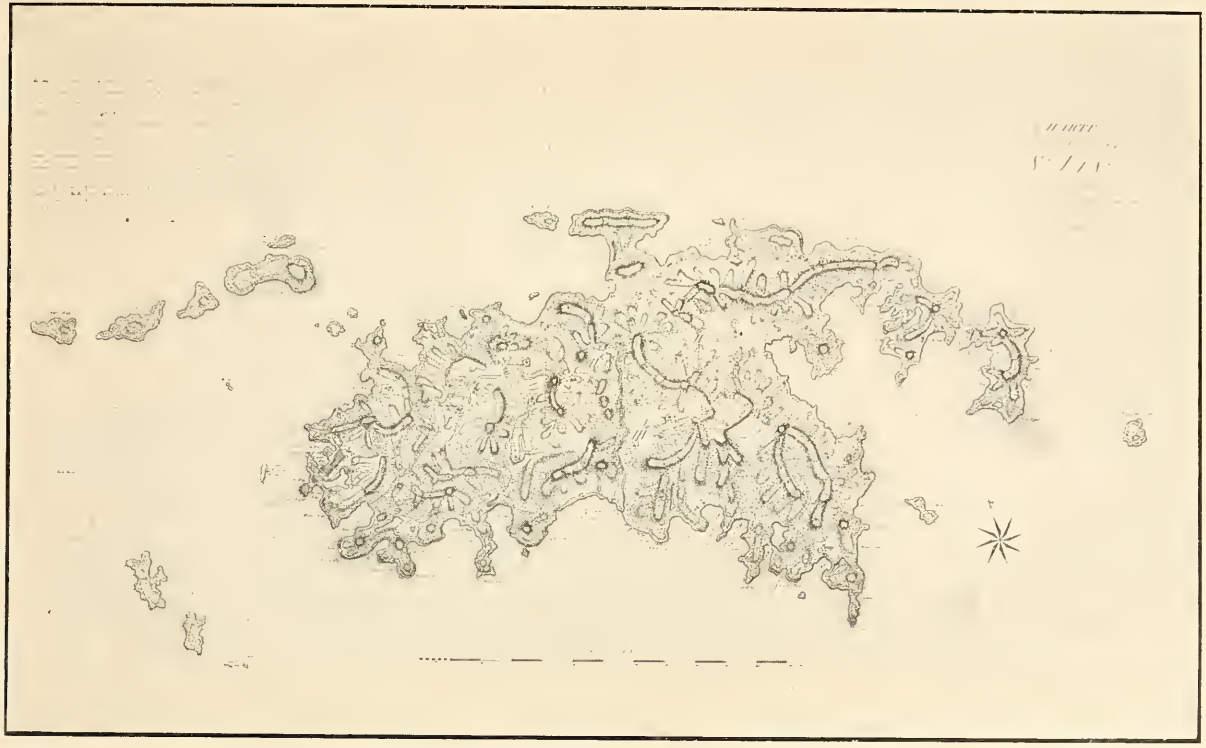
[12] See *Appendix H.*, p. 318.

period of the War of the Spanish Succession. This was due to a variety of causes, both local and general. John Lorentz, with Juel and Moth, had done much to put the Brandenburg African Company out of the running. Quarrels within that company's management had done the rest.

The revival of the Danish company's slave trade had benefited both it and the planters. The liberties allowed the latter in disposing of their plantation produce had helped to make them capitalists. This prosperity is indicated by the increase in the number of plantations laid out just after the opening of the new century. In the years 1692 to 1700 only fourteen new plantations were assigned to planters.[13] These plantations had a total working force of seventy-nine slaves. By 1705 an additional thirty-seven new plantations had been laid out, with a working force in that year of two hundred and eighty slaves. From 1691 to 1715, the total number of plantations had risen from one hundred and one to one hundred and sixty. It is the increase of negroes, both relatively and absolutely, that gives the most striking proof of the rapid development of St. Thomas as a plantation colony during these years. While the number of white men, women, and children increased only from three hundred and eight-nine to five hundred and forty-seven (1:1.4), the number of negro slaves increased from five hundred and fifty-five to three thousand and forty-two (1: 5.5), during the same interval (1691–1715). In other words, the number of slaves had risen nearly four times as fast as the number of whites.

John Lorentz had laid the foundations of a fiscal system by which the inhabitants of the colony bore a proper share of the expenses of the civil government. These expenses were largely defrayed by a poll and a land or "ground" tax. The poll tax, which appears first to have been collected in the year 1692–1693, amounted to 2½ *rdl.* for each planter and for each "capable" slave, and to 1¼ *rdl.* for the planter's wife and for each of his adult children. For "manquerons," or those unable to do a full

[13] *Land Lister for St. Thomas.* The names of the planters as they appear in the records are: David Liron, Reynier Claever, Jean Cramy, Zent van Wundergem, Jan Arnout, Samson Burin, Mintje de Tooy, Jürgen Hansen, Mathias Terling, Jürgen Carstensen, Joris van Overschelde, Pieter de Windt.



MAP OF ST. JOHN (1780)
(Prepared and published by P. L. Oxholm, Copenhagen, 1800)

[*Facing page 127*]

day's work, and for minor white children, the planters were not required to pay any poll tax. The land tax on St. Thomas (and St. John after its occupation and the expiration of the eight years of exemption) was assessed according to the width of the plantation, the length being in most instances fixed at three hundred feet.[14] For each one hundred feet in width, the planter paid 10 *styver*, or 20 *skilling*.

Inasmuch as the width of the sugar plantations on St. Thomas in 1733 averaged one thousand five hundred and forty feet, and the average number of negroes employed on each one was a trifle over twenty-six, the amount due from each planter in poll and ground taxes amounted to about 3 *rdl.*, 1 *mark*, for the latter, and nearly 70 *rdl.* for the former tax. Similarly, the owner of a sugar plantation on St. John, of average width and average slave equipment (thirteen negroes), would have to pay nearly 2 *rdl.* in land tax and 35 *rdl.* in poll tax.

So long as the returns were properly made out by the planters, the burden would seem to have fallen upon the persons taxed very nearly in proportion to their ability to pay. Indigent persons were indeed, as a rule, entirely exempted from the payment of the poll tax.[15] The indirect taxes that the planters were forced to pay through being obliged in certain cases to sell their produce to the company, or to ship them on the company's vessels, and to buy goods needed from the Company's magazine, will be discussed in another connection.

St. John had been claimed by the Danes as early as the first administration of Adolph Esmit. In a letter written early in 1684, the latter mentions having made an attempt through two moneyed merchants from Barbados to set up "works" (forts?) on St. John; but the English governor, Stapleton, sent two sloops over to the island, thus driving away forty men sent over by the Barbados merchants. "This is the third time," wrote the Danish governor, "that he has driven our people [from St. John?]".[16] On his return to St. Thomas in 1688, Esmit was instructed to attempt the settlement of St. John by

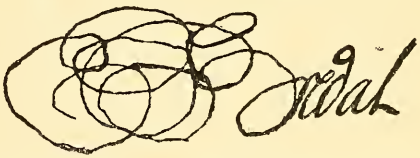
[14] The Danish foot is slightly longer than the English.

[15] *L. L., St. Th., passim.*

[16] Esmit to Directors (January 26, 1684), *A. E., 1682–89.*

placing from four to six men there and encouraging them to begin planting,[17] but it was not until 1717 that the project was actually carried out. In November, 1716, Governor Erik Bredal wrote the directors that many of the St. Thomas inhabitants were inclined to go to settle St. John, but that they were held back solely by fear of the English, who were unwilling to let any nation go there to cut down the timber.[18] On the twenty-fifth of the following March, the governor had a vessel loaded with guns and ammunition, and with provisions from a ship that had recently brought in a cargo of flour, meat, etc., to take him to St. John with twenty planters, sixteen negroes, and five soldiers.

"I have planted there the flag of our most gracious king, and fired a salute," wrote the governor, "and then we feasted, and drank the health, first of our sovereign, and then of the Com-



pany. Later, I selected a place on which to build a fort, a convenient location which commands the inlet to the harbor as well as the harbor itself, and a level space beneath it on which a village can stand. The harbor is quite secure, and when a person is within it . . . he sees land all about him. I have permitted the planters to indicate which pieces of land they preferred, and have selected a place for the Company's plantation just a cannon-shot distant from the fort (which is to be built there). Later the planters have returned because of their fear of the English and are simply waiting cautiously to see what the latter will attempt. . . ." [19]

[17] Directors' instructions to Esmit (November 9, 1687). *A. E., 1682–89.*

[18] Bredal and Council to Directors (November 24, 1716), *B. & D., 1717–20.* In a letter dated July 23, 1715, Governor Crone and council informed the directors that John Henry Sieben had recently proposed, on behalf of himself and fifteen other planters from St. Thomas, to begin the occupation and cultivation of St. John. *B. & D., 1714–17.*

[19] Bredal to Directors (May 8, 1718), *B. & D., 1717–20.* "*Thi de frygter for de Engelske og sidder ikkun og lurer paa, hvad de ville tentere.*"

Meantime Bredal proceeded to have the ground cleared for the fort, and a road cut through the brush for bringing up the nine four-pounders that were to guard the fort. The five soldiers under a Danish officer, named Axel Dahl, and the sixteen negroes, took charge of this preparatory work. When the English Leeward Islands' governor, General W. Hamilton, saw that the Danish efforts were serious, he sent John Marshall, the "Capt. Commendant" of Hamilton's regiment, with the man-of-war *Scarborough*, one of the two English ships then in West Indian waters, to St. Thomas to forbid the Danes to occupy St. John, hinting that they had no good right to St. Thomas itself.[20] Bredal replied firmly that whatever he was doing was being done on the authority of his sovereign, and he was not aware of having transgressed his rights. "If they [the directors] would only assist me with a hundred men," the governor pleaded in his letter to the directors, "I well believe that when the English come with their two ships . . . they will not perform any great miracles."

Despite the report of English threats that they would dislodge the infant settlement, the work went on. After long searching fresh water was found on the island. This not only made it unnecessary to bring water by boat from St. Thomas, but made it possible to begin work promptly on the fort, which required fresh water for the lime and the cistern.[21] Maize and sweet potatoes (*Patatter*) were planted in the cleared space to furnish provisions for the negroes.[22]

According to the ordinance issued by the St. Thomas government on March 24, 1718, the St. John planters were required to have one white man on each plantation within three months from the time it was taken up; exemption from taxes was granted for the first eight years as on St. Thomas; sugar mills were to be erected within five years on pain of confiscation; and planters were to be permitted to take as much lime and wood as they

[20] Hamilton to Bredal (November 19, 1717), *B. & D., 1717–20; see also* John Mars[c]hall's "*Explication*," (undated), *ibid.* Both Hamilton's letter and Marshall's "Explication" are copies.

[21] Bredal to Directors (May 8, 1718). *Ibid.*

[22] Bredal to Directors (July 8, 1718). *Ibid.*

needed.[23] By 1720–1721, thirty-nine planters had received deeds to plantations on St. John.[24]

The early inhabitants came entirely from St. Thomas and were equally varied in their nationality. Nine of these were Danes, five were French Huguenot refugees or of refugee stock, and nearly all the rest were Dutch. Their coming was prompted by a variety of motives. Some had sunk hopelessly into debt on St. Thomas, others had had badly located plantations there, while many of them naturally expected to improve their previous state. Their plantations were nearly fifty per cent. larger than those on St. Thomas, their average width being one thousand five hundred and fifty-six feet. The number of negroes held at this early period cannot be ascertained, but within a decade of the actual settlement,—namely in 1728—there were one hundred and twenty-three whites to six hundred and seventy-seven blacks (1: 5.5), while in 1733, the year of the first serious slave insurrection, the whites numbered two hundred and eight, and the slaves one thousand and eighty-seven, a slightly higher ratio of white inhabitants (1: 5.2).[25] Although the number of plantations was increased only twenty-five per cent. in those five years, the number of negroes on them increased sixty per cent. Nevertheless in 1733 St. John had but ten negroes on the average to each plantation, to St. Thomas's twenty-five.

The Company went into the plantation business on its own account early in its career. The encouragement that it was expected to give to plantation life on St. Thomas undoubtedly accounts in large part for the willingness of the Company's directors to permit the Brandenburgers to establish a factory

[23] *Conditioner tilstaaed St. Jans Indvaanere* (March 24, 1718). *Ibid.*

[24] See *Appendix H.*, p. 407.

[25] Governor Frederick Moth wrote to the Directors early in 1726: "St. John is now entirely settled, [so] that there is no more land left to give away except at the Fort, and the Company's plantation, which is still lying idle, as it is not yet surveyed. . . . Next year the greater number of the St. John inhabitants are to begin paying the poll and land tax. There are already about 20 sugar works built, and others in process of building, so that I calculate that St. John will produce 600,000 to 800,000 pounds of sugar, besides [some] cotton, on [all of] which customs duties must be paid. . . ." Moth to Directors (March 6, 1726), *B. & D., 1724–27.*

there. The failure of the latter to found a plantation was the chief basis for the complaints made by Danish diplomats concerning the failure of the Brandenburg African Company to fulfil its treaty obligations. The first plantation, the Company's "Sugar Plantation," appears to have been established in the Old Quarter on the southeast shore of the Great Northside Bay. The second of the Company's plantations was probably the "New Quarter Plantation," built on or near the present "*Ny Herrnhut*" midway between Long and Jerse Bays. The third and smallest plantation was located at Mosquito Bay, from which the plantation took its name. The Company also secured a plantation on Krum Bay (or Crum Bay) which seems to have been of little value, and was sold at auction in 1726, at which time the Mosquito Bay Plantation was disposed of.[26] Lorentz's proposal to have the Company start a plantation at Crab-Pan Bay on the southwest side seems not to have been followed up.

The size of the Company's plantations has been impossible to ascertain because of the confused and complicated system of bookkeeping that prevailed and the omission of reference to them in the census reports (*Land Lister*). The latter fact is explained by the circumstance that the purpose of the annual census was to ascertain the amount of taxes due from each inhabitant. Naturally the Company did not propose to tax itself. A fairly accurate idea of its planting activities may be gained from an examination of the number of negroes credited to the Company's account year by year. The greater part of these must have been employed on the plantations, though the number, no doubt, includes those used at the Company's forts and magazines. In 1698, when the Company was beginning to take over the Guinea trade, it owned 178 slaves, whose inventory value was placed at 9,043 *rdl.*, or about 50 *rdl.* each. In the same year the "Sugar Plantation" was valued at 3,654, the "New Quarter Plantation" at 3,763, and the "Mosquito Bay Plantation" at 536 *rdl.* The effect of the War of the Spanish Succession on St. Thomas plantation life is indicated by the

[26] The purchaser was Governor Frederick Moth. See *Negotie Journal for St. Th.* (August 29, 1726).

figures for 1705. At this time, when the island was prepared to reap the advantages of Danish neutrality, the number of negroes had jumped to 251, their inventory value to 13,441 *rdl.* (53.7 *rdl.* each), while the three plantations were entered on the books at 6,289, 3,141, and 905 *rdl.* respectively. Although the second had fallen eight per cent. in value, the first had increased seventy-two and one-half per cent. and the third sixty-nine per cent. over its inventory value in 1698. After 1715 the value of the plantation as recorded in the books remains stationary, while the number of the negroes gradually decreases from two hundred thirty-eight in 1716 to one hundred ninety-six in 1726.[27]

The following table, while based upon a careful examination of the Company's books, is not presented as giving an absolutely dependable picture of the plantations as dividend-paying propositions. It is never quite certain that accounts have not been "doctored" for emergencies, or that the intricacies of the elaborate bookkeeping of two centuries ago have been completely solved. In fact the officials themselves were at times hopelessly tangled in the meshes of their own system.

THE COMPANY'S PLANTATIONS ON ST. THOMAS

Abbreviations: S. Pl., Company's "Sugar Plantation"; N. Q., "New Quarter Plantation"; M. B., "Mosquito Bay Plantation."

Year	1690	1691	1693	1698	1700	1701	1702	1703[28]	1704
Total negroes	122	158	191	178	180	176	177	[69][29]	....
Value of negroes	10,957	14,038	16,144	9,043	9,504	9,380	9,500	4,019	——
Value of S. Pl.	4,572	4,743	7,122	3,651	3,654	3,638	4,155	5,415	6,374
Value of N. Q.	2.318	3,300	6,371	3,414	3,763	3,763	3,679	2,981	3,206
Value of M. B.	457	457	1,112	536	536	536	536	380	905
Total investment	18,424	22,538	30,749[30]	16,644	17,457	17,317	17,870	12,795	——
Proceeds from S. Pl.	1,137	2,026	2,514	2,941	2,422	807	2,260	2,219	2,849
Proceeds from N. Q.	410	3,486	2,351	1,441	1,337	720	936	369	1,663
Proceeds from M. B.	248	645	268	———	135	134	155	[-472]	464
Total	1,795	6,157	5,133	4,382	3,794	1,661	3,351	2,116	4,976
Per cent. profit on investment	9.7	27.2	16.7	26.3[31]	21.6	9.6	19.1	17	26(?)

[27] Cf. *Appendix H.*, p. 318. *L. L., St. Th.*

[28] The figures given for 1703 cover the period from June 9, 1702, to December. 31, 1703. All money values are given in *rdl.*

[29] This includes only the sound or "capable" slaves.

[30] The high values for 1693 apparently have some connection with Thormöhlen's contract which was discontinued in 1694.

[31] This percentage covers 1½ years (August 8, 1698, to February 8, 1700).

It would add to the value of the above figures if it could be determined exactly on what basis the profits were calculated, —whether, for example, the sugar and cotton are credited to the plantations at the same rates as those paid to the private planters. Likewise, the exact amount of sugar, cotton, etc., produced on each plantation would be useful in the study of plantation economy, but unfortunately the accounts were not kept separately, and it is practically impossible to extract the individual items in a way that will give a dependable result. A few of the available figures will give an idea of the productiveness of the Company's plantations. John Lorentz, in writing to the directors in April, 1702, informed them that sixty-seven hhd. of sugar had been cooked on the Sugar Plantation and that as much more was expected; that the New Quarter Plantation, despite the recent drought and the attack of worms upon the cane,[32] had yielded during the past year and the current one one hundred and seventy casks (*Tönder*). Governor Gardelin, in reporting the state of the Company's plantations to the directors in June, 1733, which was like 1701 a dry year, stated that the Company's sugar plantation had thus far yielded eighty-eight hhd. of sugar, and 433 *rdl.* worth of cotton; the New Quarter Plantation, one hundred and three hhd. of sugar; and the Company's plantation on St. John,[33] sixty-two hhd. in place of the expected one hundred and fifty hhd. The severe drought had crushed the hopes for a good crop, and the governor proposed the sale of the last-named property, "since it is worth nothing, but does more damage to the Company [than good]." [34]

The sugar, cotton, etc., raised on St. Thomas and on St. John after its occupation, were usually bought in whole or in part by the Company's St. Thomas factor at a price fixed by the governor and council alone, or by agreement with the planters. They

[32] Lorentz to Directors (April 24, 1702), *C. B., 1690–1713.* The effect of these calamities is seen in the percentage of profits that the plantation yielded, as shown in the table above.

[33] See above, p. 130 (n. 25).

[34] Gardelin and Council to Directors (June 18, 1733), *B. & D., 1732–34.*

were stored in the Company's warehouses until one of its ships arrived from Copenhagen or the Guinea coast. If the directors were not certain of a cargo they would leave it to the Guinea slave-ship captain to take whatever cargo was on hand back with him to Denmark. As long as the company had only St. Thomas and St. John, it was rarely necessary to employ more than two ships a year to empty the St. Thomas magazine, and frequently a single vessel was ample. The difficulties that the local factor often met when he tried to force the planters to sell their produce to the Company at a fixed price, will be dealt with in a later chapter. Europe-bound ships usually took dye woods (pockwood, fustic, Campeachy wood, etc.) on board for ballast. Sometimes a schooner was sent over to Porto Rico for hides or tobacco if interloping trade at St. Thomas had been dull.

A few illustrations will serve to show the character of the trade, and give some indication as to its extent. The *Frederick the Fourth*, under Captain Peter Andersen Wæröe, left St. Thomas on April 6, 1706, with the following cargo, secured at the prices indicated,[35] quoted in rixdollars, "Mark" and "Skilling."

		Rdl.	*M.*	*Sk.*
9,112 lbs.	Campeachy wood at 2 *rdl.* per 100	182	1	6
7,507 "	stock fish (dried cod) at 2 *rdl.* per 100	150	–	12
4,484 "	fustic	67	3	—
33,867 "	Brazil wood	529	3	—
360,005 "	[brown] sugar at 3½ *rdl.* per 100	12,600	1	—
11,672 "	white sugar at [price not given]	620	1	—
29,137 "	cotton at 12 *sk.* per lb.	3,642	–	12
6,739 "	cacao	914	2	—
1,242 "	tobacco	44	5	10
129 "	indigo at 1 *rdl.* per lb.	129	–	—
89 "	caret (sea turtle)	69	3	14
	staves for barrels and casks	180	2	4
	nails	32	–	—
	provisions beyond those needed	167	3	—
		19,329 *Rdl.* 4 *M.* —		

In the following year, Peter Smith, the wealthy Dutch mer-

[35] *N. J. for St. Th., 1705–08* (April 6, 1706).

chant, paid the required duty [36] on the following goods which he sent to New York on an English bark: [37]

12 hhd. (2,674 lbs.) white sugar [38]	10 sacks (1,012 lbs.) cacao
12 hhd. (5,500 ") brown sugar	4 bales (1,000 ") cotton
27 bales (5,838 ") cotton	4 sacks (340 ") cacao.

It will be noticed that sugar and cotton were by far the most valuable items in the Copenhagen as well as in the New York cargo. Whether a ship was able to secure a good cargo or not depended on the funds that the St. Thomas factor had at his command, and upon the prices he was willing to pay. The amount of the funds depended in turn upon the sale of the Company's cargoes. The one sort of cargo the arrival of which was most frequently hailed with joy, not only by the St. Thomas planters, but by their various neighbors, was "black ivory," —African slaves. When times were good, slaves meant cash in the St. Thomas treasury, cash meant good cargoes for the return voyage, and bulging ships meant good dividends for the European stockholders.

The distribution of these cargoes after their arrival in Copenhagen remains to be considered. First, as much as possible of the cargo was sold at auction. The sugar refiners came to buy the brown sugar, the cloth manufacturers bid for the cotton, the dyers for the dyewoods and so on. The dyewoods had to be ground or pulverized by hand before they could be used, and as the work was exceedingly injurious to the health, the state kept up an institution called "*Rasphuset*" where it set those criminals to work whose long continued existence was least desirable.[39] Export trade was especially to be encouraged, as it brought ready money into the country. The duty on exports to foreign places was only one per cent., while on goods shipped from Copenhagen to places within the kingdom of Denmark-Norway, a duty of two and one-half per cent. had to be paid.

[36] Six per cent. on some goods and four per cent. on others.

[37] *N. J. for St. Th., 1705–08* (October 18, 1707).

[38] The white sugar in these and the preceding cargoes probably came from the French islands, where there were refineries.

[39] Mention of "*Rasphuset*" is made in O. Nielsen, *Kjöbenhavn paa Holbergs Tid*, p. 360.

The foreign ports to which the West Indian cargoes were reshipped were mainly in the Baltic region, and included Lübeck, Danzig, Stettin, Königsberg, on the South Baltic, Stockholm and Gotenborg in Sweden, and (beginning with 1750) St. Petersburg in Russia, and Amsterdam in Holland. Among local towns to which West Indian products were distributed were Kiel, Flensborg, and Aabenraa in the duchies; Elsinore, Nyborg, Slagelse, Odense, and Aalborg in Denmark proper; and Bergen, Christiania, Trondhjem and Fredrikshald in Norway.[40]

According to the list of shipments from Copenhagen to foreign and domestic points which is contained in the Company's "*Udskibnings og Passeer Sedlers Copie-Bog, 1709–1754*," no sugar and little cotton were shipped out of Copenhagen from 1712 to 1720, inclusive. From 1721 to 1733, when St. Croix was purchased, the shipments to foreign ports were more than twenty times those to domestic ports. During the period from 1729 to 1749, sugar was exported but a single year[41] to a foreign port. It was in September, 1729, that the Company began refining its own sugar,[42] and this fact, combined with the king's edict of July 4, 1733, requiring privately owned refineries to use only the sugar that came from the West Indian colonies as long as the supply held out, will explain the falling off in exports. The purchase by the Company in 1737 of the two principal refineries, those owned by the Pelt and Weyse families, gave the Company a monopoly of the refining business,[43] and made it possible for it to absorb most of its own sugar.[44]

[40] *Udskibnings og Passeer Sedlers-Copie-Bog, 1709–1754, passim.*

[41] In 1741, 11,443 lbs. of sugar were sent to Stockholm. *Ibid.*

[42] *Mariager MS.*, 130. The Company had been granted the privilege of putting up a refinery, by the king on April 17, 1721. *Vest. Reg., 1699–1746.*

[43] *Mariager MS.*, 149.

[44] See table showing exports to domestic and foreign places in *Appendix L*, pp. 328–331.

MAP OF NORTHERN EUROPE: BALTIC AND NORTH SEA LANDS

CHAPTER VII

THE SLAVE TRADE IN THE DANISH WEST INDIES

The rise of a class of capitalist planters in the Danish as well as in the other West India islands, was made possible through the labors of the African slave. Indentured white servants too frequently succumbed to the climate or proved quite intractable as laborers; while the attempt to use deported criminals from the home country proved generally abortive, in the West Indies as elsewhere. The sudden change in habits and environment practically prohibited strenuous effort on the part of the whites whose lot was cast in tropical America. If the agricultural resources of those regions were to be appreciably developed, it must come about through the white man's efforts to earn his bread by the sweat of the negro's brow. It was "the blacks bought by way of trade" who by reason of their ready adaptability to field labor early became "the most useful appurtenances of a plantation, and perpetual servants." [1]

This trade, so loathsome to the modern mind, had been begun by the Portuguese before the discovery of America. But the few hundred negroes that they had bought from the Moors had been brought into Europe itself.[2] After the occupation of America had begun, Portuguese traders not only supplied their own colony of Brazil but made contracts or "asientos" to supply the Spanish colonies with slaves. Interloping expeditions from the Guinea coast of Africa to the West Indies like those of Sir John Hawkins are conspicuous in the sixteenth century because they were rare. During the period of union between Spain and Portugal (1580–1640) the Dutch wrested from the Portuguese their monopoly of the Guinea trade, and jealously guarded the trade thus won against encroachments by other nations. The rise of the English plantation colonies,

[1] *Cal. Col., 1661–68*, No. 791 (1664?).

[2] Lucas, III, 77, 78.

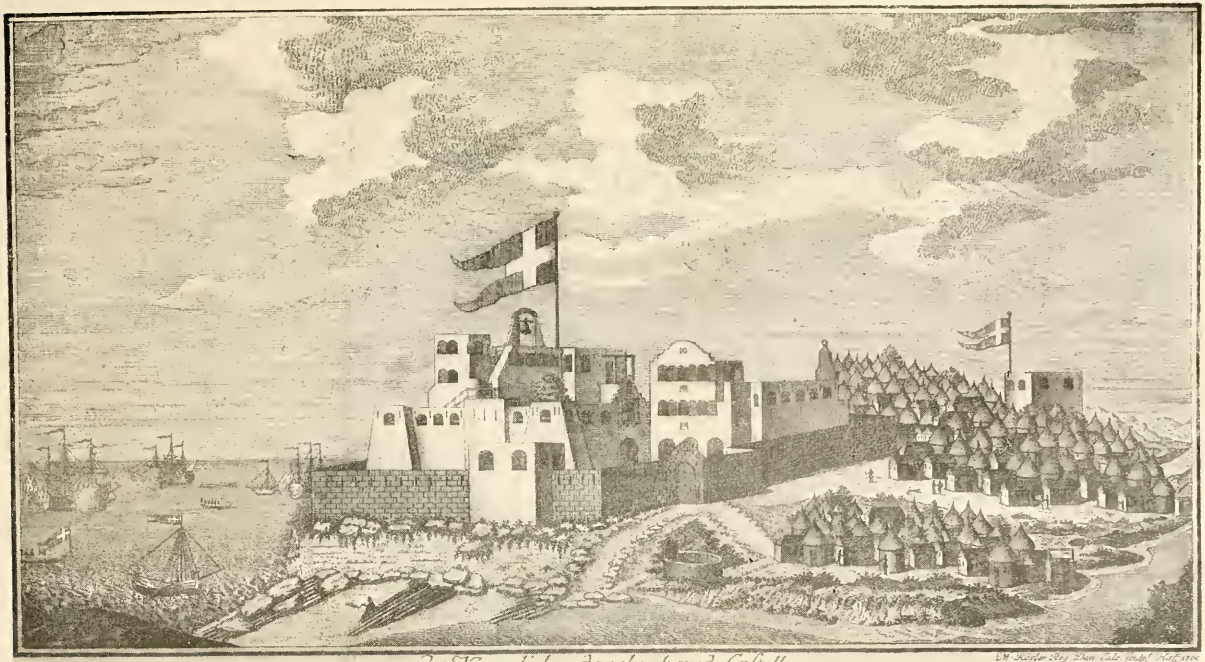
particularly Barbados, in the first half of the seventeenth century, and Jamaica in the second half, led the English to begin exporting slaves to their own American possessions. It is worth noticing that the English slave trade began in earnest about 1640, just when a Dutchman is said to have introduced the art of sugar making to the English colony of Barbados.[3] The establishment in 1672 of the Royal African Company of England has been previously noted. This company was enjoying its greatest prosperity during those years when the Danish West India and Guinea Company was attempting in the face of tremendous obstacles to secure a permanent foothold for its colony at St. Thomas.[4]

A trade that had had the sanctity of century-long custom was little disturbed by the conscientious scruples of reformers. There was no one to plead the rights of the negro as Las Casas had championed those of the Indian. The few timid voices that had dared to raise themselves on the negroes' behalf before 1700 were scarcely heard in the din of the struggles for commercial supremacy and exploitation.[5] Once the sugar planting had been well begun, the demand for suitable labor would become insistent. To the seventeenth-century planter there was but one course to pursue. Over on the Guinea coast, in a latitude but slightly lower, was an unlimited supply of laborers, many of them already accustomed to servitude, who readily adapted themselves to the conditions of plantation life. The problem of the day, so far as the planters and the administrators interested in plantations were concerned, was simply one of method,—how best to bring these laborers where they were needed. The attempt of individuals to solve this problem led to interloping, an art in which the Dutch were preëminent; while the attempt of merchant-statesmen led to the formation of companies under state or royal patronage.

[3] Lucas, III, 80, 81.

[4] The average annual dividend declared between 1676 and 1688 amounted roughly to eight per cent. annually, reaching as high as twenty-two per cent. during the first two years. See Beer, *The Old Colonial System, 1660–1688*, I, 343.

[5] Beer (I, 322) cites an anonymous pamphlet published in 1684 and a protest against the slave trade by the Pennsylvania Quakers in 1688.



CHRISTIANSBORG CASTLE, ON THE GUINEA COAST OF AFRICA

LEGEND: "The Royal Danish Main Castle Christiansborg at Accra on the coast of Guinea as seen towards the S. W."
Engraved by M. Rösler, Copenhagen, 1761.

[*Facing page 139*]

The early efforts of Denmark to establish factories on the Gold Coast have already been referred to. The conditions under which the trade was carried on need to be considered somewhat in detail. A popular misconception with regard to the slave trade is that white men filled their ships with kidnapped slaves. If such had been the rule it would have been a practical impossibility to have brought the enormous numbers that in the course of time were exported to the New World. In the years from 1680 to 1786, for example, one writer estimates that 2,130,000 slaves were imported into the British West India islands alone.[6] Though cases of kidnapping doubtless occurred now and then, the simpler and safer plan, and the one usually followed, was for the European state to negotiate a treaty with a local chief or "king" through its representative who was frequently the captain of the ship. The arrangement usually provided for the lease or cession of a bit of coast territory, preferably near a river that furnished good anchorage and communication with the "hinterland." Here was built a "castle" or fort with negro huts and an enclosure for the slaves bought. The governor or factor acted merely as the middleman, buying the slaves from the chief with whom he had contracted. The chief made his captures from among the tribes with which he was at war or on unfriendly terms. If hard pressed himself, he could receive protection at the fort. Captured negroes from inland could be floated down the river to the fort, where the factor bought those that were fit and kept them under guard until the Company's ship came along from Europe with its cargo, or if there was no prospect of that, until Dutch, English or other interlopers came and offered a reasonable price. The cost price at the Guinea factory varied according to conditions along the coast. When the demand was strong in the West Indies, ships of interlopers and companies swarmed along the coast of Africa from Senegal to Angola, and the price rose accordingly.[7]

[6] Bryan Edwards, *History . . . of the . . . West Indies* (2 v., London, 1794), II, 55; Humboldt, *Travels*, VII, 147.

[7] In a letter to the directors dated March 28, 1737, the St. Thomas officials suggest that slaves be secured from the region between *Caplahoe* and Cape

A single illustration will serve to indicate the nature of the slave market at the Guinea factory from the solely commercial point of view. To those who were in the trade, it was purely a business matter. The *Hope* Galley under Captain Lawrence Span arrived at Christiansborg castle on December 15, 1726, with a cargo, not counting the brandy, of 16,135 *rdl.* A fortnight later when the New Year's stocktaking took place, the Company was credited on its Guinea books with fifty men slaves valued at 84 *rdl.*, twenty-five women at 48 *rdl.*, three boys at 50 *rdl.*, and four girls at 36 *rdl.* each. This appears to have been the Company's wholesale purchase price. The actual cargo taken on board on March 6 included 238 souls, indicating a brisk business in the opening months of the year. The invoice of the departing ship shows the following cargo and values: one hundred and forty-seven men at 88, seventy women at 56, eleven boys at 56, and ten girls at 40 *rdl.*, making a total value of 17,872 *rdl.*[8] If the discrepancy in the prices of adult male and female slaves as shown in the above invoice was general, it might appear that the mortality among the women in the cargo was higher than among the men, for in the St. Thomas market women sold for nearly or just as high a price as the men, but there is no direct evidence to show that such was the case.

The horrors of the "middle passage" have been frequently painted in most lurid colors. Indeed, at its worst it would be difficult to exaggerate the picture of misery presented by a returning slaver. Naturally, it was to the captain's as well as the Company's interest to bring as large a part of his cargo safely to the other side as possible. But where the captain's reward depended on the number brought over, or where the officers could bring over slaves on their own account, the temptation to overcrowd the vessel was very great. In case of stormy weather, when the hatches had to be closed down, the air in the crowded hold became so stifling as to suffocate many. Good water was often difficult to obtain, and bad water, as well

Three Points, and between *Ziode Wolta* (river Volta?) and *Hardra*, as these were usually better than the Loanga or Angola slaves. *Martfeldt MSS., VI; Secret-Raadets Breve, 1733–39.*

[8] *N. J. for Guinea; N. J. for St. Th.* (1727). See *Appendix J.*, pp. 320–326.

as unwholesome food, brought on violent forms of dysentery and other internal diseases, with which the physicians who accompanied the ships found themselves unable to cope. Sometimes the negroes would become unruly, and if successfully subdued would have to be loaded down with chains. An anonymous author, writing in 1684, gives a graphic and characteristic description.

"For no sooner are they [the blacks] arrived at the Sea-side, but they are sold like Beasts to the Merchant, who glad of the booty puts us aboard the Ships, claps us under Deck, and binds us in Chains and Fetters, and thrusts us into the *dark noisom* Hold, so many and so close together, that we hardly breathe, there are we in the hottest of Summer, and under that scorching Climate without any of the sweet influences of the Air, or briezing Gale to refresh us, suffocated, stewed, and parboyled altogether in a Crowd, till we almost rot each other and ourselves." [9]

P. F. Isert, himself a physician on a Danish slave-ship, writing in 1788, when the agitation against the slave trade was at its height, tells of the indignities to which the negro women were subjected at the hands of the ship's officers, and of the artifices used by the factors to sell miserable wretches who were nigh unto death before the buyers could learn the serious nature of their ailments.

Before the negroes were bought on the Guinea coast they had to undergo a careful inspection and sorting under the supervision of the Company's surgeon who accompanied them on the voyage to the West Indies. The usual mode of calculation on the Guinea coast in the seventeenth century was to rate the full-grown negro man or woman as the unit, or "*Pies de Indies*," the others being classified as "$\frac{2}{3}$ boys," "$\frac{2}{3}$ girls," "$\frac{1}{2}$ boys," and so on. The fraction indicated what part of the price of a full-grown slave the younger ones should sell for. It must not be supposed that the authorities who permitted this trade were entirely unmindful of the fact that the negroes had souls that might be worth saving. In their contract with Arff, by which

[9] Philolethus Physiologus, *Friendly Advice to the Gentlemen Planters in the East and West Indies* (1684), Part II, pp. 82, 83 (quoted in Beer, *op. cit.*, I, 345).

he took over the Guinea trade in 1689, the directors required the lessee to keep a minister on board the slave ships and at the Guinea factory.[10] It is nevertheless to be feared that the zeal of the trader met with greater rewards from the authorities than that of the priest.

There is good reason to suppose that the extent of the slave trade must have standardized its processes, so that there was little difference in the treatment of negroes along the various parts of the Guinea coast. The Dutch probably got their cargoes across the ocean with the least loss of life. The Brandenburg officials at the Gross-Friedrichsberg factory were largely Dutch, and what happened there may be considered typical for the coast. A surgeon of the African Company gives in his journal a vivid description of what he saw up to the time that the slave-ship was ready to sail. The surgeon, who began his service there in December, 1692, wrote as follows:[11]

"As soon as a sufficient number of these unhappy victims were collected, they were examined by me, the healthy and strong ones were bought, while those who lacked as much as a finger or a nail or were in any way defective—called *Magrones*[12] —were returned.

"The slaves that were taken were made to kneel, twenty or thirty at a time; the right shoulder was greased with palm-oil, and it was branded in the middle with an iron that bore the initials C.—AB—C. (*churfürstlich afrikanisch-brandenburgische Compagnie*); then they were strictly guarded in the lodgings provided for them. Where a band of fifty or sixty slaves had been secured, they were coupled together in twos or threes and driven to the coast under escort. It was my duty to watch over the transport, for which purpose I was carried in the rear in a hammock, so that I could see the entire column. Once the coast was reached, a prearranged signal brought the ship's boats ashore to bring their black cargo on board. Some of these unfortunates followed their leaders weakly and unresistingly, even

[10] *Vest. Reg., 1671–99*, fol. 166, ¶16 (July 27, 1689).

[11] Surgeon Johann Peter Oettinger's Journal (quoted in Schück, I, 331 *et seq.*).

[12] Probably a corruption of "manquerons," a term applied in the West Indies to negroes who were below standard.

when they were forced to hasten by the lash of a whip; others, however, howled and danced; and there were still others, especially women, who so filled the air with their heartrending shrieks, that drums and other noisy instruments were scarcely able to drown out the sound, and it often cut me to the quick. Yet it did not lie in my power to alter the fate of these unhappy beings. . . .

"On April 4 the ship was finally filled with seven hundred and thirty-eight slaves of both sexes, so that we were able to take leave of the king (*i. e.*, the chief) and return to the ship. After being carried in palanquins (*Sänften*) to the beach, we treated our carriers and attendants with brandy and then climbed into the boats. In the evening we arrived on board the ship, wet, sunburned and stung by mosquitoes and other pests, and we thanked God that we had at last emerged safely out of this heathenish land. Yet what a horror overcame me, when I visited the decks in which the unhappy victims were confined, and breathed the frightful atmosphere in which they were compelled to live. Chained together by the feet in pairs they lay or sat in rows next to each other, and my heart well nigh stood still at the thought that I must see such beings, to all appearances like men, treated like chattels."

No doubt the slaves on board ship were as well cared for as the crowded conditions permitted, for captain and owners were interested in bringing as large cargoes as possible safely across the ocean. When the weather was favorable they were brought on deck a few at a time to limber up their stiffened muscles by dancing and exercise. The women were frequently placed, unchained, in a room by themselves.[13] The monotony of the daily fare of pork, beans, and barley gruel was relieved by weekly allowances of millet, and by brandy and tobacco on alternate days. Palm-oil was used to flavor the gruel.[14] The success of a voyage was largely dependent upon the kind of

[13] P. F. Isert (*Reise nach Guinea*, pp. 305 *et seq.*), gives an interesting account of his experiences on the Guinea coast and on a slave-ship.

[14] Directors' order, (August 8, 1725), *Amer. & Afr. C. B., 1716–26.* The weekly allowance for each slave consisted of $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. pork, 2 qts. beans, 2 qts. barley, $\frac{2}{3}$ qt. millet, $\frac{1}{4}$ pint brandy, 2 oz. tobacco, 1 pipe, $\frac{1}{8}$ pint palm oil.

negroes secured. Certain parts of the coast had a bad reputation as sources of slave supply, for their negroes were liable to grow violently mutinous when threatened with bondage. Such, for example, were the El Mina negroes from the Dutch part of the coast.

The percentage of loss on the Guinea-West Indian slave-ships varied from ten to about fifty-five per cent. of those taken on, so far as the limited number of available statistics shows.[15] The scenes that ensued when the prospective buyers boarded an incoming slave-ship were frequently well-nigh riotous and frightened the poor blacks, who had little or no idea of what awaited them, almost to death. The white men would make a wild dash for the negroes that they intended to buy, and separate them from the main group by way of securing first right to purchase. Sometimes the cargo would be taken on shore, kept under guard, and sold in small lots until entirely disposed of.

The eagerness with which the directors of the Company took up the slave trade as a means of increasing the shareholders' profits, and the tenacity with which they clung to their monopoly of the trade once they had begun it, emphasize the importance ascribed to this traffic by the moneyed interests of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. It was not until the governorship of John Lorentz, when St. Thomas begins to be administered as a normal, well-ordered colony, that the directors were able to carry out any plan for direct participation in the slave trade with ships owned by the Company; and it was not until 1733, after the Company had suffered a number of severe losses at sea, and about the time it began negotiations for the purchase of St. Croix from France, that it was ready to let the slave trade fall back into private hands. This experience of over a third of a century, during which the Danish West India and Guinea Company attempted to supply slaves to its own colony, and also to make St. Thomas a depot for the supply of slaves to the neighboring lands, needs to be explained in some detail.

[15] These percentages are drawn from the figures of ships sailing in 1698, 1699, 1700, 1707, 1714, and 1733.

It was the profits made by the Brandenburg African Company in some of its early Guinea voyages that brought home to the observant governor Lorentz the possibilities of the slave trade as a source of revenue for the Danish company. Two Brandenburg slave-ships[16] that arrived in St. Thomas in November, 1696, before the peace at Ryswick had been concluded, and hence while Louis XIV was still at war against the league of opposing states, brought to St. Thomas more than one thousand one hundred pieces of human freight. One of the Brandenburg captains whose cargo contained four hundred and eighty slaves remarked to the governor that if he had had more room on board he could have made as fine a bargain in slaves as he could ever desire.[17] The other captain confided to the governor the opinion that the Danish forts on the Guinea coast afforded excellent prospects for the slave trade. These successful ventures and the information he received from the captains led the Danish governor to express to the directors the hope that the Company would take up the Guinea trade, "since all other trade is as nothing compared with this slave trade." If the directors would only make a beginning with a few hundred Guinea slaves, urged Lorentz, they would not find it a bad venture, but "the first experience would give them such joy, that the slave trade would hold its place before all other sorts of commerce, and the Company would feel itself impelled to continue it."[18] The governor's enthusiasm was not lost on the directors, who had great faith in their representative at St. Thomas and were especially anxious to get the Company to the point where it could pay dividends and thus regain the confidence of the investing public.

Nicholas Arff, the Guinea lessee, had, as we have seen, per-

[16] *Frederick III* under Capt. Jacob Lambrecht with six hundred and thirty, and the *Electoral Princess* under Capt. Wouter Ypes with four hundred and eighty slaves.

[17] Lorentz to Directors (November 30, 1696), *C. B., 1690–1713.*

[18] *Ibid.* The French were also becoming increasingly active in the Guinea trade during the interval preceding the outbreak of the War of the Spanish Succession. On July 9, 1701, Louis XIV issued an arrêt granting to a new Guinea company certain rights that had been held by a former one. Scelle, *La traite negrière,* II, 687.

mitted his lease to expire because of serious and unforeseen losses brought about by the European war. Just at the time that the Ryswick negotiations were being concluded, the Danish West India and Guinea Company was being reorganized under a new charter which bore the date of September 28, 1697. New conditions demanded a corresponding readjustment. Baron Jens Juel and Mathias Moth, who had so faithfully backed the governor in his endeavor to stifle the Brandenburg African Company's activities at St. Thomas, were retained as directors.[19] The Company's total capital, including a ten per cent. assessment made in 1695 in order to secure capital to send a ship to St. Thomas for a cargo,[20] was just 84,883 *rdl.*, 2 *marks*. On this investment the shareholders had received no other returns than the three or four per cent. yielded by the Thormöhlen lease. It was not until late in 1697 or early in 1698 that the directors decided to send a ship and cargo to Guinea and the West Indies. Finding themselves unable to secure a large enough sum from the stockholders, the directors turned to a wealthy merchant, one Jacob Lerke, who contributed half of the funds necessary for the new venture. The result was the voyage of the *Copenhagen Bourse* to the Guinea coast under joint auspices. But this initial venture fell below expectations, for out of the five hundred and six slaves taken on at Christiansborg and along the Guinea coast, only two hundred and fifty-nine were delivered at St. Thomas in September, 1698, and thirty-seven of these died shortly after landing. A mutiny had broken out on board, in the course of which many had been killed or had jumped overboard. To cap this misfortune scurvy had helped to reduce the numbers to scarcely more than half of the original cargo.[21] The surviving slaves were sold at 85 *rdl.* each, which appears to have been three times their cost price in Guinea.[22] The excellent state of the West Indian market as compared with the low prices prevailing

[19] *Mariager MS.*, 103.

[20] The Company had resumed its administration after the Thormöhlen fiasco late in 1694. On March 7, 1702, Matthias Moth made a clear and fairly detailed résumé of the Company's activities in Guinea and the West Indies since 1695. See *Comp. Prot., 1697–1734*.

[21] Lorentz to Directors (October 12, 1698), *Gov. C. B., 1694–1700*.

[22] See *Appendix J*, pp. 320–326.

on the Guinea coast made the disappointment of the owners all the keener.[23]

Before the news of this partial failure reached them, the directors had arranged for the purchase in Holland of another vessel, for which a cargo valued at 30,000 *rdl.* was planned. Ten thousand rixdollars were to be invested in slaves, the remainder in other Guinea products, presumably ivory, gold, palm oil, and the like.[24] The new ship, called *Christian V*, had to be fitted out by the wealthier shareholders on their personal credit, for the others were in no mood for paying further assessments. This second ship left for Guinea in August, 1698. It fared rather better than the first, for Captain Grabner succeeded in July, 1699, in bringing into St. Thomas harbor three hundred and fifty-three slaves, almost two-thirds of the number taken on in Africa.[25] About this time the Company managed to take over Lerke's share in the *Copenhagen Bourse*, paying 7,800 *rdl.* for it.[26]

The Danes were not alone in this attempt to supply a market that had been starved during a general European war. The Dutch at Curaçao immediately prepared to resume the business with the Spanish Main which had been seriously interrupted by the war. Peace had scarcely been proclaimed before the Dutch magazines there were filled with Spanish-American goods that had been paid for largely in African slaves. The English parliament passed a bill modifying the monopoly of the slave trade in favor of private traders for not less than thirteen years beginning with June 24, 1698.[27]

[23] In the investigation instituted by the St. Thomas governor and his council, the captain, Innes Petersen, seems to have been absolved from responsibility. The same captain lost in his next voyage three hundred of a total of five hundred and thirty-eight slaves. *Landsprot. for St. Th., 1694–1711* (October 6, 1698). See *Appendix J.*

[24] *Comp. Prot., 1697–1734* (April 29, 1698).

[25] See *Appendix J.*

[26] *Comp. Prot., 1697–1734* (June 9, 1699).

[27] The Royal African Company was merely to keep up the forts and castles and was to receive a ten per cent. duty on all goods imported to Guinea and five and ten per cent. on certain goods exported. Gold, silver, and negroes went out duty-free. But the market was so large and the possibilities for profitable agriculture so vast that the demand was not easily satisfied. After the suppres-

When the report spread through the islands that the Danish governor was expecting a slave-ship to arrive, a Jamaica trader sent word to St. Thomas that he would like to invest 30,000 *rdl.* in slaves if the governor would guarantee their delivery at a certain time.[28] This the latter was unable to do, so that when the expected slave cargo did arrive he had to employ a local merchant to take the surplus slaves to Hispaniola and the surrounding islands.[29]

A very considerable share of the negroes sold at St. Thomas were brought in by interlopers.[30] Unless its treasury happened to be empty, the Company rarely permitted planters to buy directly from the slave captain, and never allowed slaves to be landed without charging an import duty,—usually four per cent. This duty or "recognition" was as a rule paid *in natura*, which in a cargo of men, women, and children of assorted sizes often required some ingenious calculations. The selling price varied from twenty-five to one hundred per cent. above the cost or wholesale price, according to market conditions. In one of the agreements with the Brandenburgers it was stipulated that either party might share with the other in the purchase of interlopers' cargoes. After the coronation of Frederick I as king in Prussia in 1701 the Brandenburg African Company was left to its own fate, and practically its sole activity until its discontinuance in the reign of Frederick William I consisted of such occasional purchases as those referred to, and of protesting if its rights appeared to have been transgressed or ignored.

The distribution of slaves to other islands was usually done by traders from those islands. The keen trader, hearing of the approaching arrival of a cargo from Guinea would hasten to St. Thomas, if business conditions would warrant it, and wait there for weeks in order to get the first chance at buying a

sion of the buccaneers, Jamaica in particular progressed rapidly in its plantation life. Lorentz to Directors (January 22, 1698), *C. B. 1694–1700;* W. R. Scott, *Joint-Stock Companies to 1720* (3 v., Cambridge, 1910–1912), II, 23.

[28] Lorentz to Directors (January 22, 1698), *C. B., 1694–1700.*

[29] In this way Peter Smith took a batch of forty-four negroes off on his bark, on condition of receiving half the profits.

[30] *Appendix J.*

slave cargo. The local St. Thomas traders frequently bought considerable numbers of negroes for customers in other islands. Some good-sized fortunes were built up at St. Thomas during the War of the Spanish Succession in just this way.

The following summary taken from the Company's journals kept at the St. Thomas factory indicates how the Company disposed of one entire cargo. On July 8, 1710, a Zeeland interloper, Captain David Diniesen, sold the following slaves to the Danish company:

134 men	=	134 *Pies de Indies*
26 women	=	26
11 "2/3 boys"	=	7 1/3
20 "1/2 boys"	=	10
2 "2/3 girls"	=	1 1/3
5 "1/2 girls"	=	2 1/2
2 "1/3 boys"	=	2/3
200 head	=	181 5/6 *Pies de Indies*

at 65 *rdl.* = 11,819 *rdl.*, 1 *mark.*

RECEIPTS (in the order of purchase)

Date	*Number*	*Rdl. Price each*	*Rdl. Total*	*Date*	*Number*	*Rdl. Price each*	*Rdl. Total*
July 10	2 "1/2 boys"	50	100	July 12	3 men	100	300
	1 "1/2 boy"		50		2 "2/3 boys"	85	170
	1 "1/2 girl"		50		9 men	100	900
	1 "1/2 boy"		60		1 man		100
	1 "1/2 boy"		65		1 "1/2 girl"		55
	1 "1/2 boy"		60		1 "2/3 girl"		85
	1 "1/2 boy"		60		3 men	100	300
	8 "1/2 boys"	60	480		2 women	100	200
	1 "1/2 boy"		40		24 men	100	2400
	1 "1/2 boy"		60		3 women	100	300
	1 "1/2 girl"		60		1 "1/3 boy"		33 1/3
	2 "2/3 boys"	90	180		1 "1/2 boy"		45
	1 "2/3 boy"		100		5 men	100	500
	1 "2/3 girl"		90	July 14	1 man		100
	2 "1/2 boys"	60	120	July 26	8 men	100	800
	1 "1/2 girl"		60		2 women	100	200
	4 "2/3 boys"	75	300		37 men	100	3700
	1 "1/2 boy"		60		4 women	100	400
	1 "1/2 boy"		60	Aug. 14	20 men	100	2000
	4 men	100	400		9 men	100	900
	1 woman		100		8 women	100	800
	4 men	100	400	Sept. 19	1 "2/3 boy"		80
					Totals.....187 head		14,443 1/2 *rdl.*

Expenditures:
Provisions from July 10 to August 31....140 *rdl.*, 1 *mark.*

Losses:
From July 10 to November 8, 7 negro men died and were debited on the books at 65 *rdl.* each.

Summing up:

No. of negroes sold by September 19....	187
" " " dying before sale.....	7
" " " unaccounted for.....	6
Total bought.....	200

Total receipts from negro sales		14,443 1/3 *rdl.*
Total cost of negroes		11,959 1/6
Purchase price	11,819	
Food	140 1/6	
	11,959 1/6	
Net profit		2,484 1/6 *rdl.*

$2{,}484^{1}/_{6} \div 11{,}959^{1}/_{6} = 20^{7}/_{10}$, the percentage of net profit on the cargo, according to the books, exclusive of current expenses.

It will be noticed that the cargo was sold mainly in small lots, that the *Pies de Indies* had no definite relation to the price except in the case of the full-grown negroes, and that the cargo was practically disposed of within five weeks. The larger lots were sold mainly to government officials who knew the intricacies of the business and were often able to take advantage of the situation to their own profit.[31]

The prices of slaves, wholesale and retail, during the War of the Spanish Succession afford a good trade barometer for St. Thomas. Denmark was neutral, and in a better position than in the previous war to reap the advantages of neutrality. From 45 and 80 *rdl.* in 1702, the wholesale and retail prices respectively rose by 1704 to 60 and 100 *rdl.* and three years later to 80 and 100 *rdl.* The highest point seems to have been reached in 1714, when slaves sold at St. Thomas for 120 *rdl.* each. This price is excelled in 1722 by a cargo that brought 125 *rdl.* per head.

Business conditions at St. Thomas, which were evidently stimulated by Denmark-Norway's neutral position during the Spanish Succession War, suffered a slump after its close. Not until the end of the Northern War (the treaty of Nystadt was concluded between Sweden and Russia in 1721) when Sweden had been reduced to a second-rate power, do commercial conditions in the Danish islands, as evidenced by the state of the slave trade, begin to show improvement. During the years preceding the conclusion of peace with Denmark (1720) the St. Thomas government prepared itself more than once to resist a rumored Swedish attack.[32] The depredations of pirates, re-

[31] See below, p. 191.

[32] *Udtog af Secret-Raads Prot., 1710–20* (August 5, 1715; June 22, 1716). *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI.

viving difficulties with the Spanish neighbors of St. Thomas, complications with the English in the Leeward Islands because of Danish occupation of St. John, and the peculations of its local officials, combined to make the position of the Danish company and its colonists extremely uncertain. Besides, this was a period of hard times when the St. Thomas government supplied the lack of coin by issues of paper money. In attempting to account for the business depression the St. Thomas authorities were inclined to place the emphasis upon the ruin of the formerly lucrative trade with Spanish America.[33] The planters on the other hand were convinced that the Company's officials at St. Thomas and those directing the Company's policy were responsible for the changed conditions.[34] Certain it is that the loss of the principal foreign market and the disappearance of hard cash were bound to affect all forms of business and particularly the slave trade, which was very difficult to carry on except on a cash basis, and which required considerable sums for its successful prosecution. To be forced to wait until crops matured and then to find themselves face to face with a variety of petty local restrictions, was the prospect that awaited the traders who attempted to carry on business at St. Thomas on a barter basis.

The Danish West India and Guinea Company seems rarely if ever to have had more than two ships at a time on the Copenhagen-Guinea-West India run. Dutch interlopers furnished far greater numbers of slaves for the St. Thomas market than the Danish Company.[35] In view of the expertness and daring of the ubiquitous Dutch trader it was not necessary to invest much of the Company's capital in slave-ships except when the Dutch slavers failed to appear. As a rule the St. Thomas authorities had only to await the arrival of a cargo which they could accept or refuse as they saw fit according to the condition of the slaves and the state of the market.

During the years from 1697 to 1733,—that is, from the time

[33] Governor and Council to Directors (August 10, 1714), *B. & D., 1714–17.*

[34] The commission sent over by St. Thomas planters in 1715 in order to bring about certain changes in policy is dealt with in Chapter IX.

[35] See *Appendix J.*

the Company began the Guinea-West India trade on its own account until the directors voted for its discontinuance,—the Company lost not fewer than eight ships. The greater number of these were employed in the Guinea as well as in the West India carrying trade. The total number owned by the Company at one time or another in this period amounted only to twenty.[36] The following résumé of the losses will show their approximate extent:

The *Guldenlew*, intended for the Copenhagen-St. Thomas run, was lost at Lessöe, off the Norwegian coast, on November 20, 1702.

The *Cronprincen* (the *Crown Prince*) was lost at Isle de Prince in the Guinea gulf on May 31, 1706, through the explosion of its powder magazine while en route from Guinea to St. Thomas. Only five on board were saved of whom three eventually reached Denmark.

The *Christian V* and *Frederick IV* left Guinea on May 29, 1709, with a rich cargo of gold and slaves. Both of them missed St. Thomas and were wrecked in the Bay of Honduras on March 7, 1710. The Spaniards confiscated their cargoes and brought them to Porto Bello.

The *Christiansfort*, while on its way to Copenhagen from Bergen where it had been forced to winter, was lost with its West Indian cargo at Höje Wærde March 2–3, 1713.

The *Jomfru Alette* was captured on October 31, 1717, by a Swedish privateer, while on its way from Norway to Copenhagen with a West India cargo.

The *Salvator Mundi* was wrecked, August 15, 1729, on Anegada reef near Virgin Gorda while en route from St. Thomas to Copenhagen with a return cargo.

The *Christiansborg* was wrecked in the Cattegat on its return from St. Thomas on September 17, 1730.

During the decade preceding the purchase of St. Croix (1733) the policy to be pursued with regard to the slave trade was an all absorbing question at the meetings of the stockholders. In their instructions of November 16, 1723, the directors had specifically sought to encourage private traders to sell their

[36] *Vest. Reg., 1699–1746; Mariager MS.*, 110 *et seq.*

slaves at the St. Thomas factory.[37] Four years later Frederick Holmsted who had been employed as bookkeeper in the Company's Copenhagen office for about twenty years advised the directors against the Company's active participation in the slave trade, but his advice was not heeded. From 1728 to 1733, inclusive, the Company made a vigorous attempt to revive its Guinea-West Indian commerce. At least three new ships were put into active commission, and about 200,000 *rdl.* according to Holmsted's account were sunk in the venture, but with no prospect of the Company's being able to pay interest on more than half of that sum. When the directors and chief stockholders met in February, 1734, there ensued a heated debate as to whether or not the Company should continue the trade. In this discussion there seems to have been no mention of humanitarian or religious arguments, the sole question being one of dividends. The news of the arrival of the *Laarburg Galley* at St. Thomas with only two hundred forty-two of her original cargo of four hundred forty-three slaves[38] was used with telling effect by those who opposed the continued participation of the Company in the slave trade. These opposition leaders included three directors[39] and three "chief shareholders"[40] (*Hovedparticipanter*). In the written argument drawn up by these men is included the following estimate of moneys expended and received in connection with the *Laarburg Galley*, which statement they assert to be a "proper and true relation" of how matters really stood.[41]

The ship *Laarburg Galley* has cost	7,683	*rdl.*	4	*sk.*
Repairs and equipment	12,881	"	3 *m.* 15	"
Cargo . . . and insurance on slaves	31,066	"	5 " 13	"
Interest on ship and equipment from date of sailing to return, and of cargo . . . at only 6 per cent	3,922.	"	3	"
Total cost of expedition	55,554	*rdl.*	1 *m.*	

[37] *Holmsted's "Deduction"* (February 4, 1734), *Co. Prob., 1697–1734*. *Cf.* also Höst 64 *et seq.*

[38] *B. & D., 1732–34* (May 8, 1733).

[39] Blome, Holmsted, Klauman.

[40] C. A. von Plessen, Dose, Kreyer.

[41] *Deduction og Voto* (February 25, 1734), *Comp. Prot., 1697–1734*.

On the other hand, there should be deducted for deterioration of ship		5,000 *rdl.*
Profit on gold and other goods	3,157 *rdl.* 4 *m.* 10 *sk.*	
Freight which ship should earn from St. Thomas hither	4,110 " 2 " 6 "	
		7,268 " 1 *m.*
		12,268 *rdl.* 1 *m.*
Delivered to Fort Christiansborg surplus of various goods from the ship, which with usual 10 per cent. advance for freight amounts to	14,281 *rdl.* 4 *m.* 14 *sk.*	
On the other hand, the ship has taken slaves, etc., at the fort for	3,976 "	
Leaving		10,305 *rdl.* 4 *m.* 14 *sk.*
An order (*Assignation*) for which is to be redeemed at Cape Coast		1,608 " 3 "
Slaves on St. Thomas have been sold for goods, in part for 50 per cent. above the cash price		26,658 " 3 " 6 "
To balance account		16 " 8 "
Total		50,857 *rdl.* 8 *sk.*

The advocates of Company participation in the slave trade had used figures based on the *Laarburg Galley's* last voyage as an argument in support of their views.

"According to the figures we have quoted," ran in effect the arguments of the opponents of slave-trade under the Company, "there is a loss, up to the time of the ship's return, of but (*sic*) 4,697 *rdl.*, 4 *sk.* on this voyage, which with one exception is the most fortunate of twenty voyages which have been undertaken. It must at best be called a bad business, when so considerable a capital as over 50,000 *rdl.* must be furnished and is expected to yield interest while it is being risked in the waters of three continents, and, after all that, is still unable to make a better showing to the stockholders."

The victory of the opposition was decisive. In the final vote eighty-five out of a possible one hundred and thirty-four votes were registered against the Company's continuing in the

slave trade, and only twenty-two in favor of it. Twenty-seven refrained from voting. The votes of the royal family were among the majority. The slave trade was formally thrown open to subjects in the Danish West Indies who might wish to participate by a royal mandate issued April 25, 1734. The directors fixed a duty of eight rixdollars on slaves brought to St. Thomas and half that sum on those brought to St. Croix.[42] Since this concession to freedom in trade failed to bring about the hoped-for increase, the trade was thrown open to all Danish subjects, whether they lived in home lands or in the colonies. The results were just encouraging enough to make it worth while for the Company to enter into an agreement with private merchants and shipowners on December 3, 1745, with a view to preventing needless competition and duplication of effort. Finally, in 1747, a plan was formulated and put into operation which resulted in the Company's virtually absorbing the private interests. The reorganization of the Danish West India and Guinea Company under the "Convention of 1747" marks the last stage of the slave trade as a field of investment for that Company. An attempt was made to correct some of the more common abuses connected with the Guinea trade. Captains and officers were forbidden under severe penalty to take slaves on board on their own account, and by way of encouragement to large cargoes a progressive bounty was provided, beginning with 7 *rdl.* and rising to 20 *rdl.* for each slave above three hundred.[43]

But the years that elapsed before the king took over the Company's holdings in 1754 were too few to permit of any extensive development. It became clearer and clearer after 1750 that the days of the Company were numbered; consequently it was more important for the latter to conserve its resources than to divert them into uncertain channels.

So long as men's ideas of human rights suffered no substantial change, and so long as the demand for sugar and cotton made it profitable to raise those products, just so long would there be a demand for slave labor on the West Indian plantations. The

[42] *Mariager MS.*, 174.

[43] *Trykte Octroyer . . . för 1750* (Mandate of October 14, 1747).

labor problem as it appeared to the merchants and statesmen who were called upon to solve it was merely one of method; for African slaves remained in the eighteenth, as they had been in the seventeenth, century "the strength and sinews of this western world." They were indeed the chief agency that furnished the wealth, for the control of which European nations were willing to throw down the gage of conflict and usher in titanic wars. In fact, no small part of those resources which were dissolved in the smoke of eighteenth-century European battlefields was extracted from fertile West Indian plantations of cotton and cane by the sweat of the negro's brow.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SLAVE AND THE PLANTER

Few indeed are the negroes in America who are able to tell from what part of Africa their ancestors came or to what tribe they belonged. Though they have every "prospect of posterity" the sources by which they might develop a "pride of ancestry" are shrouded in impenetrable mystery. Which of his forbears came from Calabar or Loango, from the El Mina tribe or from Madagascar, it would be next to impossible for any negro to tell, and the problem would certainly tax the ingenuity of the most skilful genealogist. Yet the black population was as varied in its way as the white. Besides the brand of the importing company and the owner there might be found on the imported negroes [1] in any plantation colony the tattoo marks and slashings that were peculiar to tribes of many different characters, scattered along the African coast from Senegal to Loango. These imported negroes were drawn from all stations of life in their native land. Their numbers embraced rich and poor, haughty chiefs and humble retainers. Not infrequently had a chief been forced to sell some of his own numerous wives that he might keep his contract with a punctilious trader.[2] A negro who had been accustomed to rule in his native land was not unlikely to prefer death to bondage. If he was landed alive he might be expected to make trouble for his owner by running away or by stirring up rebellion among his fellows. Freshly imported slaves were distributed among the older and the native-born slaves in order that the problem of adjustment to the new condition of servitude might be rendered less acute. But the period of "apprenticeship," during which the raw laborer had to be broken in to the routine of his task, must always have been trying both for slave and owner.

[1] Called *Bosal* negroes by the Danes and Dutch.

[2] Oldendorp, *Udtog* . . . (Kjöbenhavn, 1784), Part 1, p. 179.

The status of the negro was not fixed by any single "black code," but was determined by a series of laws passed by the colonial authorities from time to time. These regulative mandates began to appear before 1700 and became more severe as the ratio of negro to white population increased. When there were three adult whites for each five adult slaves, as was the case in 1691, there was obviously little difficulty; but when there came to be not fewer than eight full-grown slaves for each adult white person, as was the ratio indicated by the census reports made in 1720 and 1725, the situation became vastly more complicated. With the increasing size of the plantations [3] absentee landlordism became more general, a larger number of planters was forced to resort to white managers, and in many instances the supervision of the slaves was left to negro drivers.[4] The local government often found it difficult to impress upon the planters the urgent need of keeping close watch upon their slaves.

Upon an owner's taking possession of a plantation, his first care was to have his negroes clear a plot of ground and plant such things as maize, yams, sweet potatoes, beans and cassava upon it. The negroes were expected to raise all their own food, except for such low-grade fish or defective Irish beef as might be allotted to them when the food supply ran short.[5] A very few plantations were devoted mainly to "provisions," particularly on St. Thomas, but never to exceed four per cent. of the total number.[6] In course of time each negro or negro family was allotted a plot of ground, and not infrequently the negroes were permitted to sell the surplus for themselves.

In the busy season the negroes' working day was long and hard, though no harder than the lot of many a white farm hand of to-day in the Mississippi valley during the harvest and threshing season. At about four o'clock in the morning the

[3] The size of the average plantation on St. Thomas in 1725 was nearly twice that in 1691.

[4] Usually referred to as *Bomba* negroes.

[5] Bredal to Directors (July 8, 1718), *B. & D., 1717–20.* Provisions are generally referred to as *Kaast* or *Cost* in the documents.

[6] In 1725, out of a total of one hundred and seventy-seven plantations on St. Thomas, seven were used for producing provisions. *Cf. Appendix H,* p. 318.

negro driver, or *bomba*, would rouse the sleeping slaves by ringing a bell or blowing a *tuttue*, or conch shell. The working day began at daybreak, and at eight or nine o'clock they were allowed half an hour in the field for a breakfast consisting of corn bread and salt meat with perhaps a little sugar-cane juice if rations were short. The noon intermission from twelve to half past one gave them a chance to prepare their meal and to rest during the fierce midday heat. The day's work usually ended at sundown, though in harvest season they often continued until nine or ten in the evening feeding live-stock, carrying wood to cook-house and water to cisterns and distilleries. Saturday afternoons and Sundays they had to themselves.

The constant influx of fresh *bosal* negroes from Guinea helped to keep alive the negroes' native customs and superstitions. Witches were especially dreaded. The glance of a witch into the eyes of a new-born babe was believed to be likely to take away its breath and to cause it to die. A hungry witch might even devour an infant that was not protected from its gaze. The chief influence that helped to eradicate these beliefs was the presence of the Moravian missionaries. Despite bitter opposition from local officials as well as from planters, they kept up their beneficent labors from the time of their first landing in 1733 until they became a permanent factor in the life of the islands. They labored incessantly, whether in the fields or in the meeting houses, to teach the simple, ignorant slaves the precepts of Christ.[7] After over two decades of Moravian missionary efforts the Danish Lutheran church finally established a regular mission on the islands in 1755.

Respect for the property of others was not a virtue to which the West Indian slave could truthfully lay claim; hence the various repressive measures by which the local authorities attempted to check the vending of goods by negroes except when written permission had been granted by their owners.[8]

[7] The classic account of early Moravian missionary efforts in the West Indies is that of Oldendorp (*q. v.*) which forms the basis for the earlier pages of H. Lawaetz's *Brödremenighedens Mission i Dansk-Vestindien* (Köbenhavn, 1902).

[8] The first of these appears to have been issued March 29, 1688, by Adolph Esmit. *Cf. Governors' Orders*, Bancroft Collection; *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. I,

Such goods were too frequently found to have been stolen from the slave's owner or from some neighboring planter.

The planters' most constant difficulty was with runaways. Although St. Thomas was but a small island, it did not reach its maximum cultivation until towards the end of the first quarter of the eighteenth century. The result was that with the increasing severity that accompanied the development of the St. Thomas plantations, slaves were constantly disappearing into the "bush" or wild forest. In order to cope with this problem the planters were early organized into a sort of militia whose members were assigned to do duty, either on horseback or on foot, in the various parts of the island. This planter-police was especially useful during the War of the Spanish Succession in guarding against raids on St. Thomas plantations by lawless elements from among the belligerents.[9] Not infrequently hunts for runaways (*maron-negers*) were organized in which slaves who could be trusted were employed to do the rough work.

The chief means of communication between the more remote and inaccessible plantations and the harbor on the south side was by canoe. The mountainous character of the island and the torrential downpours to which it was subject rendered the making and repairing of roads a costly matter; but the numerous "bays" with their convenient beaches lent themselves to the keeping of canoes and small sailboats. The latter were frequently used by white men who with a few negroes would sail off to Crab Island, for instance, the best turtle-fishing ground near St. Thomas. When the slave-hunt in the bush became too successful, it is not strange that the hunted negroes, who were often proficient in handling the canoes, should take to the boats and pull for Porto Rico. There, just beyond Crab Island, was a promised land from which rarely indeed was a slave returned. The government at St. Thomas labored in-

Placater for St. Thomas. The preceding paragraphs on negro life on the plantations are drawn mainly from an article by J. C. Schmidt, an employee on the Princess plantation owned by Governor-General Schimmelman. It appeared in *Samleren* for 1788 (2. B.) under the title *Blandede Anmærkninger, samlede paa og over Ejlandet St. Kroix i Amerika.*

[9] In *Kopibog for St. Thomas, 1703–15* (July 22, 1704) is a list of the various planters, etc., with their duties and places to which they were assigned.

cessantly to prevent an exodus of slaves from the island. From the days of John Lorentz to the end of the Company's career, numerous ordinances, mandates, and the like were issued cautioning planters to keep their canoes chained up, and threatening them with fines and worse if they failed to obey.[10]

The question of the return of fugitive slaves formed during the greater part of the history of the Company the principal theme of the relations between St. Thomas and Porto Rico. The instances where slaves fled from Porto Rico to St. Thomas were so exceedingly few that it is impossible to escape the conclusion that the St. Thomas planters, with their more intensive cultivation and their desire to gain a competence in a short time, treated their slaves far more harshly than the Spanish planters.[11] The Spanish argument for refusing the return of fugitive slaves was rather ingenuous in that they held that the slaves came over to be baptized. In a claim against the Spanish nation made out in the Company's office in Copenhagen in 1745 and evidently intended for use by the Danish envoy at Madrid, the number of slaves that had escaped from both St. Thomas and St. Croix to Porto Rico was fixed at three hundred. These were of course "the best and most valuable of the Company's and the inhabitants' slaves." [12] The arrival of each new Spanish governor became the signal for sending over a deputation from St. Thomas to congratulate him and to inquire whether or not he brought with him orders from his king concerning the fugitive slaves. Although the Danish governor usually sent over presents in the form of table delicacies and was offered others in return,[13] he received no runaway negroes nor any equivalent for them. These claims for fugitive slaves appear never to have been satisfied during the Company's existence, and were indeed not adjusted until 1766.

[10] Extracts for 1703–09 (October 2, 1706), *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI. Numerous similar orders were issued at later times.

[11] In the census list for 1715–16 occurs the item "twenty-four fugitive slaves," which seem, however, to have been slaves escaped from St. Eustatius.

[12] This did not include slaves stolen in 1702, nor two shiploads that stranded on the Honduras coast in 1710. *Dir. K. B., 1733–54* (May 11, 1745).

[13] See, for instance, Governor Francisco Dania's letter to Governor Magens (February 10, 1709) in *C. B., 1703–15*. Cf. Alberti, *Slavehandelens Historie*, 238.

The matter of doling out punishment to unruly negroes had its serious difficulties. It early became apparent that with the establishment of sugar planting as a fixed industry, the punishment of slaves would have to be done under the supervision of the Company's officials. In theory the "Danish law" of Christian V was supposed to apply, but the local officials were given considerable leeway in its administration, with the result that punishments were inflicted pretty much according to custom and necessity. The planter would recommend what he wished done, and the privy council with the governor would issue the final order. One planter's request, made in 1704, that a slave be punished for running away by having his foot chopped off, was considered too severe, so the poor wretch was only "hamstrung." [14] Sixteen years later another negro belonging to the same planter was punished with the amputation of a foot, and his owner was reimbursed with an indemnity of 120 *rdl.*[15] From 1720 onwards, indemnification of planters for legally killed or injured negroes appears to have been regularly resorted to, a special tax being levied on the planters for that purpose.[16] Occasionally a case for which no law could be found to apply was appealed to the directors in Copenhagen, and judgment requested. This occurred once when a planter's daughter had had illicit relations with a negro belonging to another planter. The West Indian officials recommended corporal punishment and life imprisonment for the woman, and burning [alive?] "according to the custom of the English and the Dutch" for the man. The negro appears to have escaped, though the king's sentence seems to have been solemnly pronounced from the pulpit, both in the West Indies and in Guinea. The woman's fate is not revealed.[17]

The privy council of St. Thomas, itself a body of planters, was naturally inclined to give the planter the benefit of the doubt when his relations with his slaves were called into ques-

[14] *L. P., St. Th., 1694–1711* (April 21, 1704).

[15] *N. J. for 1720* (May 18).

[16] In 1743, a planter who thus lost a slave received 170 *rdl.* Roy. Libr., *Uldall. Saml., No. 30 fol.* (October 21, 1743).

[17] P. Mariager's note to Directors (May 26, 1732). *B. & D., 1732–34.*

tion. When in 1735 a prominent planter had shot one of his slaves so that he died shortly after, his explanation that he acted in self-defense was accepted without serious question, though not without an elaborate argument based on the Mosaic code and the king's law.[18]

The many slaves who must have been well cared for and humanely treated have left but few traces behind them in the records; with them the arm of the law had little or nothing to do. As in all plantation societies the hardest work and harshest treatment fell upon the field slave. In 1733, the very year in which the slave insurrection on St. John broke out, the Company's officials on St. Thomas complained that it was nearly impossible to get any work out of former Governor Suhm's [19] house negroes, whom the Company had taken over, "unless we permit them to seek a master themselves." [20] They reported at the same time the safe arrival at St. Thomas of a negress belonging to the Company, but insisted that she had come back from Denmark so lazy that they doubted if they could ever get her to work on a plantation again. "So we will have to see," they wrote, rather resignedly, "how the Company can secure any interest on that capital, for to sell her out of her family would bring with it bad consequences." [21] This is a small gleam, indeed, yet it throws its faint light upon the more humane side of the slave-owner's nature.

The rum shop laid its blighting influence on the land almost from the beginning. Tavern brawls were frequent, and the murders and assaults for which the taverns furnished the scene gave an unpleasant variety to the judicial labors of the local authorities. In a land where soldiers received their regular allowances of "kill-devil" [22] and where many of the slaves were allotted their weekly portion, it is not strange that ordinances should have been issued strictly forbidding tavern keepers or

[18] *Kop. & Extr. S. P., St. Th., 1735–52* (October 24, 1735).

[19] Henry Suhm was governor of St. Thomas and St. John from 1727 to 1733. See *Appendix A*, p. 286.

[20] Governor, etc., to Directors (April 16, 1733), *B. & D., 1732–34*.

[21] *Ibid.*

[22] *Gardelin papers, passim.*, Bancroft Collection.

other inhabitants from selling intoxicants to negroes.[23] The idea that alcoholic drinks helped to acclimatize the new arrival had a firm hold on the popular mind. Negro feasts and dances were considered a constant menace. It is easy to understand why the whites should especially fear a negro mob crazed by drink. The legislative device of prohibition by law was not to be seriously applied to the negro until after slavery had ceased to exist, and then in the present chief home of the American negro, the southern United States.

Insurrection among its slaves has always been considered the most terrible experience that a slave-holding society could suffer. Whether in Rome with its slave risings, in Sicily or on the Italian peninsula, in Virginia with Nat Turner, or in a sugar colony in the West Indies, the prospect of a general servile uprising has equally alarmed the ruling class. It was during the first governorship of John Lorentz in 1691, a year after the first serious insurrection reported in the English colony of Jamaica,[24] that clearly defined rumors of a negro plot against the whites are first heard.[25] During those early years, when the greater number of the slaves on St. Thomas were native Africans, it is not strange that threats should have been breathed against the governor's life and that planters and Company officials alike were constantly on the lookout for conspiracies among the slaves. Cruelty on the part of an individual planter was likely to be rewarded by his slaves running away. Planters and officials must have realized the economic advantages of good treatment of so valuable a part of their plantation investment as their slaves. It was likely to require something more than individual cases of cruelty to bring about actual insurrection.

The most persistent motive that led to general unrest among the slaves was lack of food. When months of drought ruined the crops of maize, sweet potatoes, and other foods which the

[23] *S. P., 1699–1714* (March 19, 1706); *cf. Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. II (Mandate of Governor Moth's bound with Martfeldt's notes, dated December 11, 1741).

[24] Southey, *Chronological History of the British West Indies* (2 vols., London, 1826), II, 158.

[25] *Lorentz's Journal* (February 28, 1691).

negroes were expected to raise for their own sustenance, the planters were obliged to buy provisions from outside sources if they were to save their negroes' lives and prevent them from rising against their masters. In 1725–1726 the drought was unusually severe and protracted. A number of the planters let their slaves starve to death; others gave them extra holidays, with the natural result that the blacks stole right and left and became exceedingly difficult to manage.[26] Since open resistance to the whites was the worst of crimes, it is not surprising to find recorded in the Company's books for 1726 that seventeen slaves distributed among thirteen planters had been executed and were debited to the community at a price of about 120 *rdl.* each.[27] The planters secured the equivalent for their losses in fresh slaves from the next incoming Guinea cargo.[28]

In the time that elapsed between the War of the Spanish Succession and 1733, when the first serious rebellion began in the Danish islands, the Northern War had brought the activities of the Company almost to a standstill. Besides this the money stringency in the commercial world following the collapse of John Law's Mississippi Company made the revival of trade in the West Indies very slow. The Company had managed nevertheless to assist a group of planters in occupying the small, mountainous, but fertile island of St. John.[29] St. Thomas reached its maximum slave population and its maximum number of plantations during its government by the Company, about 1725. St. John's plantations had risen from thirty-nine in 1720–1721 to eighty-seven plantations containing a slave population of 677 in 1728. By 1733 there were one hundred and nine plantations with one thousand and eighty-seven slaves on St. John. In other words, there had been an increase of sixty per cent. in the number of slaves dur-

[26] *B. & D., 1724–27* (November 22, 1725); *S. P., St. Th.* (May 26, 1725); *P. B. O., 1683–1729* (December 18, 1725).

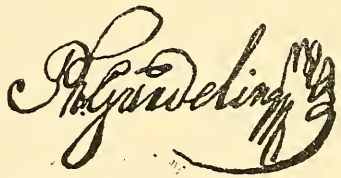
[27] *N. J. for 1726* (June 29). This may represent the slaves executed since 1723, as the planters were requested in 1725 to send in lists of slaves who had been condemned to death or severe punishment since that date. *Cf. Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. I, "*Placater for St. Thomas*" (1684–1744).

[28] Mandate of April 12, 1725. *Martfeldt MSS.*, I.

[29] See above, pp. 127–130.

ing those five years, but of only twenty-five per cent. in the number of plantations. Clearly St. John was rapidly forging ahead as a sugar island. St. Thomas, on the other hand, had begun to decline as a plantation colony; much of its ground had been under cultivation for half a century. Many of its planters, as the census lists show, secured plantations on St. John which they managed by means of hired overseers, they themselves remaining on St. Thomas.[30] The difficulty so often experienced by planters in securing honest and capable managers (*Mesterknegte*) intensified the dangers of absentee landlordism. It was not always possible for all the plantation owners to keep their plantations supplied with white overseers despite the Company's threats of fines and confiscation.

The uprising of the slaves on St. John began late in November, 1733. During the spring and summer preceding there had



been a long period of drought, followed in July by a destructive hurricane which had inflicted considerable damage upon the already suffering crops as well as upon buildings and shipping.[31] A plague of insects had destroyed many of the products of the islands, and the negroes were threatened with famine. Another storm in the early winter was especially severe on the maize crop on which the negroes largely depended for their food. In order to check the disorders among slaves which such a succession of disasters naturally encouraged, Philip Gardelin,

[30] *Land Liste for St. Jan, 1733; ibid, St. Thomas, 1733.*

[31] The governor and council reported two ships, thirteen barks, two schooners, and two two-masted boats, many canoes, sloops, and ships' boats to have been washed ashore and practically destroyed. *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI, 227 *et seq.* (July 28, 1733). In the report (*Generalbrev*) sent by the St. Thomas government to the Directors on June 18, 1733, it is stated that because of the drought, the Company's plantation on St. John yielded only sixty-two hhd. of sugar, where one hundred and fifty hhd. had been expected. *B. & D., 1732–34.*

who had risen from the posts of bookkeeper and merchant for the Company at St. Thomas to the position of governor, issued on September 5, 1733, a mandate whose terrible severity reflects the prevailing tension between master and slave.[32]

Governor Gardelin's mandate provided that leaders of runaways should be pinched thrice with red-hot irons and then hanged. A negro found guilty of conspiracy was to lose a leg, unless the owner requested lightening the sentence to one hundred fifty lashes and the loss of the negro's ears. Slaves failing to report a plot of which they had knowledge were to be branded in the forehead and to receive one hundred lashes besides. Informers of negro plots could secure cash premiums and have their names kept secret. Runaways caught within a week were to be punished with one hundred fifty lashes; those of three months' standing were to lose a leg; if they remained away for six months, it would cost them their lives. Thievery, and assistance of thieves and runaways, were to be punished by whipping and branding. A negro raising his hand against a white man must be pinched three times with a hot iron; whether he should be hanged or merely lose a hand was left to the discretion of his accuser. The testimony of a reputable white man against a negro ordinarily sufficed; in case of doubt the negro might be submitted to torture. A negro meeting a white man on the road was to stand aside until the latter had passed him. The carrying of sticks or knives, witchcraft among negroes, attempts to poison, dances, feasts and music, loitering in the village after drumbeat,—all were provided against. Free negroes implicated in runaway plots or found to have encouraged thievery were to be deprived of liberty and property, and after receiving a flogging, to be banished from the land. This mandate with its nineteen paragraphs was to be proclaimed to the beat of drum three times each year.[33]

[32] Höst, *Efterretninger*, 85 *et seq.*

[33] J. P. Knox (*Historical account of St. Thomas*, New York, 1852), pp. 69 *et seq.*, gives a crude, inaccurate translation of this mandate, dating it January 31, 1733. B. v. Petersen (*Historisk Beretning*, Kjöbenhavn, 1855) pp. 49 *et seq.* follows Höst's summary word for word, but uses Knox's date. *Cf. Gardelin Order-book* (September 9, 1733), *Bancroft Collection.*

Thus did the authorities attempt to strike terror into the hearts of the restless, half-famished negro population.

On Monday afternoon, November 23, 1733, a very badly frightened soldier and some panic-stricken refugees from St. John appeared in the fort at St. Thomas harbor and poured into the ears of the astonished governor and his council a most fearful tale. Early that morning twelve or fourteen of the Company's negroes had come up the path on the mountainside to the fort overlooking Coral Bay on St. John, each of them with an armful of wood. When the sentinel shouted, "Who is there?" he received the answer, "Negroes with wood," and opened the door. Rushing inside, the negroes pulled sugar-cane knives (*Kapmesser*) out from the wood and murdered the soldier on the spot. Meantime other negroes had assembled and together they rushed in upon the sleeping corporal and his six soldiers, killing all but one (John Gabriel) who in the early twilight managed to save himself by crawling under a bed, and later escaped through the bush and down to a canoe by the seashore. With the garrison out of the way the negroes proceeded to raise the flag and fire three shots from the cannon at the fort. This was the signal for a general slaughter on all the plantations on the island.

The ranking magistrate on St. John, John Reimert Soedtmann,[34] and his stepdaughter were among the first victims of that fateful day. A band of negroes, including some of Soedtmann's own, routed them both out and put them to death in the early morning. Soedtmann's wife was saved by the circumstance of her being on a visit to St. Thomas. Roaming about from plantation to plantation in that dim tropic dawn they slaughtered such whites as they could find, planters and overseers, women and children. As the bloody work proceeded, the band increased their numbers. The Company's and Soedtmann's negroes were joined by others;[35] and by the middle of the afternoon a body of eighty desperate blacks, half of them

[34] Höst (p. 91) refers to him mistakenly as *Christian Soetman.*

[35] Among the others were the negroes of former Governor Suhm, of town-judge Lorentz Hendricksen and of Pieter Kröyer. *Gardelin MSS.* (November 23, 1733); *cf. Martfeldt MSS.*, III, "*Om Rebellionen paa St. John.*"

with flintlocks or pistols, the rest with cane-knives and other murderous weapons, were ready to attack those whites that remained. Though murder was rife, its course did not run absolutely without control. One Cornelius Bödger, the surgeon on St. John, and his two young step-sons were saved,—the former because of his medical skill, the latter because the rebels hoped to make these boys their servants. Someone's intercession at the last moment saved the life of a former overseer of the Company who accepted with alacrity the invitation of the rebels to leave the island.[36]

The surviving planters, with such negroes as remained faithful, had in the meantime collected at Peter Deurloo's plantation on the northwest corner of the island. The approach to "Deurloo's Bay" was easily guarded, and the fugitive planters were within fairly easy reach of St. Thomas. While the St. Thomas officials and planters were making such preparations for their relief as they could, a small band of whites[37] under the leadership of Captain of Militia John von Beverhoudt[38] and Lieutenant John Charles, together with a score or more of their best negroes, were hastening with feverish activity to prepare for the rebel onslaught. The women and children were quickly transported to nearby islets. A number of the planters on the south side and on the west end of the island were warned by friendly slaves in time to permit them to join the men at Deurloo's or to seek safety in their canoes.

The negroes had met some resistance from a planter in "Caneel" Bay.[39] They finally drove him off and stopped to plunder

[36] This was Dennis (or *Dines*) Silvan. He fled to Tortola, the English island lying within sight of St. John.

[37] P. J. Pannet in his *Relation* dated December 4 (*Werlauff MSS.*, No. 22, Royal Libr., Copenhagen) gives the number at Deurloo's as about seventeen whites and twenty negroes, while the Company's officials in their letter to the Directors of January 5, 1734 (*Martfeldt MSS.*, III), give forty whites and about twenty-five negroes as the number of those on the defensive against the rebels.

[38] Also spelled Bewerhoudt, Beverhout, Beverhoudt. Among the other white inhabitants at Deurloo's plantation were John Runnels, Timothy Turner (*Thörner*), William Zytzema, and Peter Sörensen. *Gardelin MSS.* (November 23, 1733.)

[39] John Jansen lived with his wife on a cotton plantation belonging to his

his plantation, consequently they did not descend the mountain path toward Deurloo's plantation until 3 o'clock in the afternoon. When they came they found themselves confronted by the few cannon with which the plantation was furnished. Fearing to face the cannon with their charges of ball, they betook themselves to the bush, from which they emerged at intervals to fire blindly and clumsily at their ertswhile masters. Had they rushed their opponents at the start the negroes might at the expense of a few lives have mastered the plantation and captured its defenders. Instead they kept up their desultory firing during the greater part of the night and resumed it the following morning with scarcely any loss to the whites. The arrival of the news at St. Thomas had paralyzed all. Wives trembled for their husbands, mothers for their children. Governor Gardelin shared the general consternation. It was not until former Governor Moth appealed to Gardelin not to abandon the children of his government to the barbarity of their heathen slaves that a boat with sixteen or eighteen soldiers, led by a sergeant and a corporal, was provisioned with food and ammunition and sent to the relief of the St. John planters. Several creole slaves with guns accompanied the party.

The arrival of the reinforcements which were commanded by William Barens, a well-to-do Dutch planter of St. Thomas,[40] put new heart into the besieged party. Further reinforcements, consisting largely of negroes belonging to the Company and to planters on St. Thomas,[41] enabled the planters to retake the fort and disperse the negroes to the woods. Urged on by the Company's officials, the soldiers and planters on St. John began a war of extermination. For a time the negroes managed to use the Suhm plantation as their rendezvous,[42] but before the Christmas season they had been pretty effectually scattered

mother which was 3000 x 1500 feet in size. Three "capable" slaves and four children constituted his labor outfit in 1733. *L. L., St. J., 1733.*

[40] He was credited in the census of 1733 with more than forty slaves.

[41] Gardelin reported sending twenty-one of the former and twelve of the latter. Gardelin to Sergeant Thomas Magens (November 25, 1733). *Gardelin MSS.*, Bancroft Collection.

[42] Pannet's *Relation.*

over the island. Attempts by various stratagems to capture any considerable number of them failed. A white planter, one William Vessup, who had murdered a neighbor some months before and whom the authorities had failed to apprehend, was given to understand that his assistance in the slave-hunt would be welcomed by the government.[43] The negroes proved too wary to permit themselves to fall into the trap he prepared for them. Their shortage of ammunition had even led them to offer Vessup ten negroes if he would get them as many barrels of powder.[44] Enough negroes were killed or captured, however, to cause Governor Gardelin to express the fear that the decaying bodies of the dead rebels might bring a seventh misfortune —the plague—upon the stricken colony.[45] The planter Peter Pannet states in his account of December 4 that thirty-two rebels had actually been executed, and that others were being tried.[46]

The fear that the rebellion might spread to St. Thomas and Tortola not only roused the St. Thomas planters to contribute some of their slaves to the hunt on the sister island, but led their English neighbors to lend a helping hand. With many of their plantations ravaged, their crops neglected or destroyed, their cattle running wild or furnishing food for rebel slaves, it is small wonder that the St. John planters asked the Company to bear a substantial share of the burden of putting down the trouble and even requested that they should be exempted from taxes for a term of years.[47] After nearly ten weeks of vain effort a certain Captain Tallard [48] of an English man-of-war visiting Tortola sent sixty men to St. John to join in the pursuit; but an ambush in the night resulted in the wounding of four English sailors and the consequent withdrawal of the English

[43] *Gardelin MSS.*, William Vessup, who had owned a large plantation (4700 x 4040 feet) on St. John, had killed one Carl Henry Kuhlmann. The murderer's family remained for some time on the Danish islands but in very poor circumstances.

[44] Pannet's *Relation.*

[45] Gardelin, etc., to Directors (January 5, 1734). *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. III.

[46] Pannet's *Relation.*

[47] Account of St. John rebellion (July 23, 1734) in *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. III.

[48] Or *Toller.*

forces.[49] On February 17, that is, not long after this disappointment, the St. John planters again appealed for assistance from the English. On Sunday, March 7, another English captain, John Maddox, came from St. Kitts and landed on the island with about fifty volunteers,[50] though his entire party was reported to Governor Gardelin as consisting of seventy men.[51] A carefully worded contract was drawn up specifying with precision the duties of both parties and enumerating the rewards to be given for slaves captured. The attorney for the government, "fiscal" Ditlof Nicholas Friis, was sent to St. John to see that the contract was adhered to. Such elaborate precautions proved quite unnecessary. After a vain and wearying search Captain Maddox suddenly came upon the rebels on the eleventh day (March 18), but he was taken by surprise, for the negroes killed three of his men and wounded five others without any loss to them, so far as could be ascertained.[52] Maddox's men stood not upon the order of their going; they fled at once and left the island on the following day.

Stratagems, attempts at poisoning, and the armed forces of Danes and English had failed alike to dislodge or exterminate the desperate slaves. In the extremity of their despair the Danish colonists turned to the French on Martinique. A French boat was lying in the harbor, and three or four days after Maddox's departure, the French skipper set sail for Martinique with the Company's bookkeeper, John Horn, on board. Horn's instructions permitted him to offer the French four-fifths of the remaining rebels—(their numbers were estimated at a hundred men and women)—if they could catch them. Twenty of the worst ones were to be handed over to the Company, evidently for exemplary punishment. The St. Thomas government pledged itself to furnish provisions for anywhere from

[49] *S. P., St. Th. 1723–35.* The first appeal to the Tortola authorities was made by Gardelin in a letter to Markox at Spanishtown, dated November 29, 1733. See *Gardelin MSS.* under that date.

[50] *Om Rebellionen . . .* March 16, 1734. *Martfeldt MSS.*, III. The arrangement seems to have been made on February 18. *Cf. Gardelin MSS.* (February 18, 1734).

[51] Gardelin to Bewerhoudt (March 9, 1734). *Gardelin MSS.*

[52] *Om Rebellionen . . .* May 4, 1734. *Martfeldt MSS.*, III.

one to two hundred men.[53] Its envoy was provided with a fund of 600 *rdl.* to be expended as Horn saw fit.

When two French barks anchored in St. Thomas harbor on the morning of April 23 with the bookkeeper John Horn and two hundred and twenty creoles and experienced officers on board, the oft-disappointed colonists began to see their hopes revive. With renewed energy and resolution the governor and the inhabitants set to work to insure the success of this final effort. With a splendid enthusiasm the French had offered, wrote Governor Gardelin to John Beverhoudt on St. John, to send as many as six hundred men to the assistance of the Danes. The planters contributed seventy-four West Indian negroes to assist in the chase, though the governor had asked for a hundred and fifteen.[54]

Why the French should respond so joyfully it would be rather difficult to explain were it not for certain European conditions. France was preparing to take up the cause of Stanislas Leszczynski, father-in-law of Louis XV, in his attempt to secure the Polish throne. France, which had scarcely recovered from the collapse of the Mississippi Bubble, was in serious need of money. She was also anxious for Denmark's neutrality in the coming War of the Polish Succession. In this extremity a shrewd director of the Danish company turned the trick by offering the French envoy 750,000 *livres* for the island of St. Croix, with Denmark's neutrality thrown in. But the news of the transfer and of Denmark's friendship reached the French islands through their home government considerably before the directors at Copenhagen got ready to send a ship to St. Thomas. Nor do the French from Martinique appear to have divulged to the Danish authorities at St. Thomas the mainsprings of their zeal.[55] To the dis-

[53] Horn's instructions included various alternative proposals. He was empowered to hire a vessel, engage a hundred men and to buy provisions for them on the Company's account. *Cf. Gardelin MSS.* (March 21, 1734) for these instructions.

[54] *Gardelin MSS.* (April 23 and May 3, 1734) gives a list of the sixty-eight planters.

[55] For a detailed account of the acquisition of St. Croix, see Chapter X.

tressed planters and Company it was the fact of assistance and not its motives that mattered.

On the day following their arrival the French under their commander Longueville were promptly dispatched to St. John. The Danish governor lost no time in sending on planks for the soldiers' barracks and fresh meat for food.[56] Crown attorney Friis was ordered to St. John to take charge of the negroes as they were captured. He was to try and judge half of those caught and the others were to be sent to St. Thomas for trial. The French commandant was to preside over the drumhead court-martial when it should be called, but a Danish representative was to be present.[57] A force of twenty-five or thirty Danes under Lieutenant Fröling was got together and sent over to work in conjunction with the French.[58]

Within three or four days of their arrival the French forces were encamped and ready for their grim labors. Only five days before the arrival of the French on St. John, a party of about forty rebels had made a fierce attack, lasting an hour and a half, upon the burghers who were encamped on Deurloo's plantation. They managed to set the supply magazine on fire, but suffered a loss of three killed and six badly wounded.[59] From April 29 when they met their first party of rebels to May 27 when they returned to St. Thomas, the French force clung tenaciously to the heels of their quarry until they were unable to find the trace of a single live rebel. During the first three weeks they had to march up hill and down dale, through bush and bramble in an almost continual downpour of rain. By working in shifts they completely wore out the energies of the rebels, some of whom in lack of guns had armed themselves with bows and arrows.[60] On May 9 they learned that the negroes were assembled on a certain point or small peninsula of land. The band escaped, but a wounded boy showed the

[56] Gardelin to "Commandeur Sergiant" Ottingen (April 23, 1734). *Gardelin MSS.*

[57] Gardelin to Friis (April 24, 1734). *Gardelin MSS.*

[58] Gardelin to Fröling (April 24, 1734). *Ibid.*

[59] *Om Rebellionen . . .* (May 4, 1734). *Martfeldt MSS.*, III.

[60] *Domme afsagt over Negere* (May 21, 1734), *B. & D., 1732–34.*

French where eleven rebels lay in the bush, dead by their own act. A week later eight rebels gave themselves up in the hope of averting the captured rebel's fate. Two more were killed with a single shot, and two were found murdered. Of the rest there was no trace until May 24, when a report came in that twenty-four dead rebels had been found on an outjutting point of land in an unsuspected place, with their muskets broken.[61] They were reported as having lain there for perhaps a fortnight.

The Danish officials in their reports to the directors could not praise highly enough the courage of the French on the field and their uniform courtesy everywhere. "The fatigues that the French have undergone," wrote the governor in his report to his masters, "from the first day that they came to St. John cannot be adequately described. . . . The obligations that we are under to the French officers merits a far greater reward than we are able to give them. The commandant himself marched with his men for four days through forests and valleys, up steep mountain-sides, and in a continuous slush and rain, with no roof above him but the sky. Next to God, they [the officers], because of their tireless effort, deserve the credit for the present peace. Their bravery and persistence and the cheerfulness with which they encouraged their men, who began very early to tire from their strenuous efforts, will we trust be properly rewarded in high places. . . ." [62]

On their arrival at St. Thomas on May 27 Commandant Longueville and his officers and men were shown every attention and courtesy. An offer of 5,000 "French guldens" was politely refused by the French officer. After five days of celebration the French, accompanied by John Horn, embarked for Martinique. There, in turn, the Danes were treated by the French officials with marked cordiality and deference.[63]

This happy outcome, happy so far as the whites were concerned, was marred by a bitter quarrel between the local govern-

[61] This may be the group that tradition, as recorded by Höst and those following his account, has magnified to three hundred. See Höst, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

[62] *Om. Rebellionen . . .* (July 23, 1734). *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. III.

[63] *Ibid.*

ment and the planters, each side trying to blame the other for the uprising with a view to being relieved of part of the expense. But the end of the rebellion was not quite at hand; for early in August—two months after the French had left—the report came in that a party of fourteen negroes and negresses, led by one Prince[64] was still at large, though without firearms. To avoid an expensive "maroon hunt" Theodore Ottingen, an officer who had taken part in the suppression of the rebellion since its beginning, managed on promise of pardon to lure the fifteen remaining rebels to their former owners' plantations.[65] On the pretext that they would have to be appraised, every one of them was seized at a given signal on the morning of August 25 and brought to St. Thomas. Prince was not among them, for he had—fortunately for himself—been beheaded, and his head was a trophy in Ottingen's baggage. Of these fifteen rebels four "died" in prison before they could be brought to trial, four were condemned to be worked to death on the St. Croix fortifications, and the rest were done to death in various ways "such as they deserved because of their gruesome deeds," as the official letter has it.[66]

With this piece of treachery, as it would be called in this age, a success for which the responsible officer received high praise from his superiors and a lieutenancy on St. Croix, the insurrection of 1733–1734 on St. John came to an end. Besides those killed in conflict and those belonging to the Company, twenty-seven negroes were estimated to have been tried and executed.[67] A list made out in February, 1734, just before Maddox's ill-fated attempt, showed one hundred forty-six negro men and women implicated in rebellion at that time. It is clear that the story of the three hundred negroes found dead in a circle on a mountain near "Brims Bay" is pure fancy. It was first told by Höst[68] whose account of the rebellion is based partly on

[64] A negro belonging to Madame Elizabeth Runnels.

[65] See Gardelin's instructions and letters to Ottingen in *Gardelin MSS.* (August 9, 16, and 21, 1734.)

[66] *Om Rebellionen* . . . December 28, 1734. *Marifeldt MSS.*, Vol. III.

[67] *Ibid.*

[68] Höst, *Efterretninger*, 96. A recent repetition of this story is to be found in Keller, *Colonization*, p. 500.

documents and partly on hearsay and has been repeated numerous times since.

When the time for stock-taking came, it was found that planters were entitled to remuneration for thirty slaves that had been condemned to death or to work in irons,[69] and for six others —two belonging to St. John and four to St. Thomas planters. These six had been killed while fighting for their owners.[70] Of ninety-two plantations listed by Theodore Ottingen probably late in 1734 or in 1735, forty-eight were recorded as having suffered damage, forty-four as having escaped it. Of the forty-eight, thirty were being cultivated when the report was made; of the forty-four not damaged, thirty-two were being cultivated. On forty-one plantations, valuable buildings had been partly or wholly burned down by the rebels. The money loss was estimated, according to Höst, at 7,905 *rdl.* a considerable sum for so small an island.[71] As to loss of life by the white population, probably not a fourth of the whites were killed by the negroes. But this human hurricane had been far more devastating than any sent out from Nature's workshop, for it had not only destroyed men and their labor of years, but hardened their hearts and greatly delayed the prospect for more normal and human relations between master and slave in the Danish islands. It was perhaps fortunate that the acquisition of the fertile island of St. Croix occurred so shortly after this event, for this gave a welcome opportunity for the recuperation of the demoralized planters and turned the attention of men to new problems. With the development of St. Croix the economic center of gravity was gradually to be shifted to the new island, and the awful experiences of 1733 and 1734 were destined soon to become receding memories.

The government and colonists had learned a lesson in vigilance which it would be hard to forget. As reflection took the place of passion, perhaps they saw still more clearly the efficacy of

[69] Planters received 120 *rdl.* each for all full-grown slaves legally condemned to death.

[70] *S. P., St. Th. 1735–52* (October 22, 1736).

[71] "*Specification paa de Plantagier . . .* " (1734?). *B. & D., 1732–34;* Höst, 97, 98.

humaneness. At any rate, it was a quarter of a century before the Danish colonists were again seriously threatened with a slave insurrection, and then it was on the new and rapidly developing island of St. Croix. The story of the attempted rebellion of 1759 belongs to the post-Company history of that island.

CHAPTER IX

THE PLANTER AND THE COMPANY

The powers of government which Christian V placed in the hands of the directors of the Danish West India and Guinea Company were almost as absolute within their West Indian sphere as were the powers of the Danish king within his European dominions. This was necessarily so, for the venture was primarily commercial. Its purpose was to furnish a profitable field of investment for men with capital; hence the need of concentrating the management of the Company's resources in few hands. The absolutism which Christian V inherited from his father was based upon the theory of Divine Right. The directors of the Company, on the other hand, received their powers from a very worldly body of shareholders to whom they rendered account and by whom they might be removed.

The directorates of the Danish East and West India companies at the beginning were in a sense committees delegated to the work from the recently established Board of Trade. The king, as the most powerful shareholder in the Company, appointed the three original directors himself, but entirely from among the members of the Board of Trade. Acting with these directors in an advisory capacity and representing in a fairly direct manner the interests of the bulk of the shareholders, was a body of men known as "chief shareholders." From 1671 to 1733 the membership of the board of directors rose from three to seven; that of the chief shareholders, from two to five. The part played by two able directors, Juel and Moth, in guiding the Company through a maze of commercial misfortunes and diplomatic difficulties, has been brought out in a preceding chapter.[1] In the immediate supervision of affairs on St. Thomas, these men were given practically a free field.

[1] See Chapter III, above. For lists of officials see *Appendix B.*

When matters which especially affected the stockholders in general came up, such as the need of securing additional funds to enlarge the Company's activities, the situation was presented to the General Assembly of the Company, where each holder of a full share of stock had one vote.[2] Serious problems connected with the Company were sometimes referred by the king to a special commission appointed (as was the case during the first two decades of Christian V's reign) from the membership of the Board of Trade, or they were turned over (as was the case from 1690 to 1705) to special bodies known from their place of meeting as "Commissions in the Council Chamber of the Royal Castle." The majority of the members of such commissions were usually officials of the Company.

In 1704, early in Frederick IV's reign, the Board of Trade was revived, and four years later it was combined with the Police Board of Copenhagen into the Board of Police and Trade which continued down to 1731. On at least two occasions, in 1715 and in 1720, this body submitted to the king reports on petitions from St. Thomas planters.[3]

The dimensions of Denmark's commercial and colonial enterprises were never such as to permit the Board of Trade to develop into a body which could be compared in its specialized advisory functions to the Board of Trade and Plantations in England. When William III founded the latter board in 1696, the greater number of the English colonies had already passed out of the control of chartered companies. The active control of the business of the Danish West India and Guinea Company rested, as has been indicated, almost solely upon the directors. They selected the governors and chief officials both in Guinea and in St. Thomas, subject only to confirmation by the king; they found captains for their trading vessels and provided ministers to care for the souls of employees, planters, and slaves. The directors through their factor in Copenhagen were expected to find a market either at home or abroad for African ivory and West Indian sugar, cotton, and indigo.[4] They were

[2] See above, p. 34.

[3] See below, pp. 190–191. See also *Appendix F*, pp. 306–314.

[4] Parts of the cargoes were usually offered at auction to local buyers.

obliged to keep in close touch with the Dutch money market and to buy insurance for both ships and cargoes from Dutch insurance firms. In disputes between planters and Company officials in the West Indies, they were expected to act as arbiters unless the appeal was made directly to the king; in any case they were consulted before judgment was rendered. They were supposed to maintain the authority and dignity of the king among the colonists and with their various foreign neighbors.

Although the directors were given practically full power in the general management of the Company, they were forced in turn to give considerable latitude of action to their West Indian officials. The "Governor and Council of St. Thomas" were to be sure provided with most elaborate sets of instructions intended to cover every emergency, but the remoteness of the island from Denmark and the difficulty of keeping in close touch with it by post led the island officials to take more and more liberties with their orders and sometimes to use their positions for peculation and graft. For instance, as a result of his operations during the later years of the War of the Spanish Succession, Governor Crone was accused of collusion with the governor of Porto Rico and of gross fraud in the conduct of the Company's affairs. He died before the suit against him came to an end, but one of the members of his council, Christian Seeberg, treasurer at St. Thomas, was finally convicted of fraud and forced to pay a large fine. Governors Bredal and Gardelin owed their advancement to their reputation for honesty and to their ability to expose corruption in the management of the Company's affairs.

The chief official besides the governor consisted in the beginning of the merchant or factor, the bookkeeper, and the secretary. After John Lorentz's death in 1702, the factor Joachim von Holten who had failed to secure the governorship [5] *ad interim* was made "chief factor" (*Opper-Kjöbmand*) by way of solace. In 1703 the office of treasurer (*Casserer*) began to appear in the list of officials.[6] This continued to be the com-

[5] Claus Hansen was elected as governor *ad interim* by the council (*Interims-Vice-Commandant*) February, 1702.

[6] *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI, p. 207 (June 10, 1703).

position of the council, or privy council (*Secrete-Raad*), as it came early to be called, until the reorganization of the Company after the purchase of St. Croix. With the governorship of John Lorentz the Company began the policy of procuring its administrators from officials who had had experience in actual service in the Company's government at St. Thomas. Lorentz himself had begun as an assistant and was secretary and *ex officio* member of the council when Heins' death called him to the governorship. His successor Claus Hansen had been lieutenant at the fort and a council member. In fact, of the eight governors who held office in St. Thomas from 1702, when Lorentz died, to 1733, when Gardelin became governor, only two had not had their preliminary training in St. Thomas. One of these, Otto J. Thambsen, had been a commander (*Schoutbynacht*) in the Danish navy; and the other, Henry Suhm, had been in charge of Fort Christiansborg on the Guinea coast.[7] Neither of these men found his work congenial or was able to get on well with the inhabitants of the colony.

The success of the Company as a commercial venture depended very largely upon the ability and integrity of its West Indian representatives. In order to procure those full return cargoes on the advantageous sale of which the Company relied mainly for its dividends, the West Indian government needed to keep on good terms with the planters. Whenever a planter received better offers from Dutch or other skippers than from the Company, it became a difficult and delicate matter to force him to part with his produce. Although in theory the Company's officials held all administrative, legislative, and judicial powers in their own hands, they were obliged in practice to pay very real heed to the desires of the islanders.

The relations between government and planters were affected by a variety of circumstances. Too high duties or other annoying trade restrictions led the planters to attempts at evasion. In this they were aided by the numerous indentations or "bays" which made smuggling easy. Threats of shortage in provisions through drought, hurricanes or other causes sometimes forced the local government to take prompt measures for the relief of

[7] *Cf. Appendix A*, p. 285.

the inhabitants. During the severe drought in St. Thomas in 1725–1726, when negroes were dying for lack of food,[8] the St. Thomas government admitted free of duty all incoming provisions except liquors. The request of a delegation of planters that outgoing goods likewise be freed from duty was not granted.[9] At that time St. Thomas was mainly dependent upon New York for its lumber and provisions. The duty had previously been five per cent. on incoming and six per cent. on outgoing goods, according to the St. Thomas market price; and as recently as May 18, 1724, Governor Thambsen had issued an order granting to New York skippers the special privilege of importing provisions at five per cent. duty, calculated on the cost price in New York, and receiving payment in sugar and cotton on which no export duty was required.[10]

The home authorities were rather slow to admit the necessity of consulting the inclinations of the colonists in the selection of their West Indian governors. Governor Lorentz was the choice of the planters, and the directors gladly confirmed his election by the council; but Thormöhlen's governor, Delavigne, succeeded so poorly in winning the good will of the planters that the colony might have gone to ruin except for Lorentz's timely return. On the latter's death the council appointed eight of the leading planters to act with it in selecting a successor. The council nevertheless proceeded to elect the merchant Joachim von Holten to the governorship, regardless of the planters' desires. The result was a mass meeting of all the planters on the day following, called, as the records of the privy council rather euphemistically report, "at the order of the honorable council." On the insistence of eighty planters, of whom twenty-one signed a vigorously worded petition with their marks, the "honorable council" reconsidered the election and chose the planters' candidate, Lieutenant Claus Hansen. The directors confirmed the election, but they took particular pains to remind the planters that the election of a governor was none of their concern.[11]

[8] See above, p. 165.

[9] *S. P. for St. Th.* (October 3, 21, 23, 1725).

[10] *P. B. O., 1683–1729* (May 18, 1724).

[11] *Kop. og Extr., S. P. for St. Th., 1699–1714*, "*Litra S*" (June 12, 13, 1702); *Martfeldt MSS.*, vol. VI, p. 207 *et seq.*

On the death of Governor Hansen's successor, Joachim von Holten in 1708 the privy council actually called in twelve inhabitants to assist them in electing a governor.[12] The War of the Spanish Succession, with the West Indies as the scene of much of its sea-fighting, furnished a golden opportunity for venturesome neutrals; and especially on St. Thomas had the planters and traders become wealthy and influential through dealing in captured ships and cargoes brought in by the privateers of the warring nations.

The fact that the governor rarely succeeded in outliving his term of office had resulted in giving the local officials and planters their opportunity to take a hand in naming their chief executive, at least until the directors could be heard from. Governor Erik Bredal who succeded Michael Crone in 1716 insisted so strongly on being relieved of his office that in September, 1723, the directors found themselves for the first time in many years nominating and electing a governor.[13] The recipient of this signal honor was Otto Jacob Thambsen, Commander in the Royal Navy. He was awarded the unusually large salary of 1200 *rdl.* per annum. On his arrival late in April, 1724, he found the books in great confusion, the secretary quite useless, customs duties uncollected for years back, the council refractory, and the planters unwilling to do the directors' bidding.[14] After ten weeks at St. Thomas he wrote to his masters: "You must not suppose that because I do not complain, I find it enjoyable here . . . I pray that the gentlemen will not take it amiss if I remark that St. Thomas and my office appear to me like the lion's cave, where all the footprints pointed in and from which none pointed out."[15] The directors who often exhibited a painful obtuseness could hardly miss the point, but before they could take any action, the sickness of the incumbent appears to have compelled the privy and the common councils to elect a successor whom they found in Captain

[12] *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI, 1703–1709 (December 31, 1708).

[13] See list of governors in *Appendix A.*

[14] Thambsen to Directors (May 16, 1724), *B. & D., 1721–24; S. P. for St. Th.* (May 25, August 18, 1724).

[15] *Ibid.*, (July 14, 1724), *B. & D., 1721–24.*

Frederick Moth who in the position of chief factor had commended himself to the directors.[16]

The common or burgher council mentioned in connection with the election of Governor Moth, appears to have originated in 1703. It was certainly in existence at that date, for in their instructions of March 27, 1703, the directors requested that in case the governor was unable to settle disputes between the inhabitants, he should refer the case to the common council (*det ordinaire Raad*) over which the secretary [17] was to preside and which should consist of six reputable planters. From this council or court the case might be appealed to the privy council of St. Thomas sitting as a superior court (*Opper-Ret*).[18] Cases involving "life, honor, or blood," or money sums of more than 200 *rdl.* might be appealed to the directors.[19]

The capitalist planters that arose on St. Thomas as a result of the conditions brought about by the War of the Spanish Succession showed themselves willing to go to considerable lengths to make their wants and grievances known to the authorities. Two memorable instances illustrate the increasing economic independence of the planters and the growing consciousness of their importance. One of these occurred in 1706–1707, just before the St. Thomas "boom" reached its height, and the other in 1715–1716, when the reaction which frequently follows a general war had brought with it a period of economic depression at St. Thomas.

It was early in 1706, about the time that Joachim von Holten was elected governor,[20] that the planters began to make definite plans to send over delegates to present their demands in person. They had previously sent two communications to the directors, but had received no reply. Finally a little while before the scheduled departure of the Company's ship, which oc-

[16] *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI, 1723–1731, pp. 297 *et seq.* (November 21, 1724); *ibid.*, *Secrete Raads Resolutioner . . . fra 1723–1739* (August 18, 1724).

[17] Christian Seeberg or Söebierg, later convicted of fraud.

[18] In 1703 this superior court consisted of Governor Hansen, chief factor J. von Holten, bookkeeper Diedrich Magens, treasurer R. Henningsen, and secretary C. Seeberg. *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI, 1703–1709 (June 12, 1703).

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] von Holten was elected in February, 1706.

curred during the first week in April, the planters held a meeting, appointed two of their number, Andrew Zinck and Anthony Zytsema, to act as commissioners, and prepared for them an elaborate set of instructions with the demands enumerated in an imposing list of sixteen paragraphs. The instructions were signed by sixty-nine planters of whom eight signed with their marks. The signers included practically all the influential planters.[21]

A résumé of these demands will serve to show the sort of conditions and regulations by which the planters of St. Thomas felt themselves aggrieved. They began by urging an appeal to the Danish government to bestir itself to secure the St. Thomas vessels that had been seized by the French, English, and Spanish during the war. A number of the planters owned vessels with which they had carried on various kinds of trade, both permitted and forbidden. The St. Thomas inhabitants rightly felt that something might be gained if the home government could secure exemption from seizure of vessels not carrying contraband. But in such a titanic struggle, nothing but a generous display of force could make the powers involved accede to any request that Denmark might make, especially when it touched upon their own interests. They desired, as St. Thomas planters continued to desire for the next forty years, the return of slaves that had escaped to Porto Rico. This presupposed their expressed hope that Denmark might again come into peaceful relations with Spain, something that was not likely to be speedily brought about, since Denmark had not even had an envoy at Madrid after the beginning of the Spanish Succession war.[22]

With respect to matters of local taxation they asked for the revocation of the charges known as "sixth" and "tenth" taxes, amounting to twenty-five per cent., which were laid upon the property of persons leaving the island. These were especially

[21] *B. & D., 1706–10.* The instructions are in Dutch and undated. The copy in the Danish State Archives was apparently secured by the governor and sent with his comment to the directors by the ship on which the commissioners sailed.

[22] *Extr. af Gen. Brev fra St. Th., Punkt 24* (April 3, 1706), *C. B., 1690–1713.*

burdensome to those Dutch planters who had come from St. Eustatius and other islands during the War of the Augsburg League.[23] They proposed instead a four per cent. tax on slaves taken out from the colony, as was common on the French and English islands. Not only did they ask that the governor and privy council should act with six reputable planters in the decision of local matters, but they suggested that no taxes should be laid for local purposes except such as were found necessary by the governor, privy council and the "common council." They were, in short, demanding representative government, and with it that most precious prerogative of freedom-loving societies, the power of self-taxation. In concluding their list of demands and grievances the planters intimated that too heavy taxes might nearly denude the island of its white people, who because of the great heat could not work more than three or four hours a day.[24]

It is probable that the planters, in presenting through their envoys such a formidable list of demands, deliberately requested much in the hope of getting a little. The things asked for conformed neither to the interests of the shareholders as they saw them nor to the theories of government then prevailing in the absolutist state of Denmark-Norway. It is small wonder that the two deputies returned with nothing but a few vague promises to show for their trouble. The St. Thomas planters were not backward in disclosing their disappointment. In fact, they assumed so threatening an attitude that the two delegates, Zytsema and Zinck, were obliged to write to the directors asking the latter to extend them their protection.[25] The mission was apparently by no means barren of result, for in their letter of November 3, 1706, the directors granted to St. Thomas inhabitants the right to sail with West Indian goods to any place in Europe except the Danish dominions.[26] In return for this

[23] See above, pp. 69, 84, 109.

[24] *B. & D., 1706–10.*

[25] *Ibid.* (April 4, 1707); *C. B., 1690–1713* (April 6, 1707).

[26] *Cop. og Extr., S. P. for St. Th., 1699–1714* (April 2, 1708); *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI, 1703–1709 (April 2, 1708). Pending further instructions from the directors, Hamburg was also excepted from freedom of trade.

privilege the directors tried to induce the planters to assist the Company in securing full return cargoes. But the Company's policy of forbidding exports while any of its ships were in the harbor was never popular among the planters. The credit for achieving this wished for result was claimed by Director Jacob Lerke in the letter in which he congratulated Governor von Holten on his accession to office.[27] From this letter it appears that the "sixth" tax above mentioned was abolished by the directors, likewise through Lerke's efforts.[28] The taxes on imports and exports fixed by the governor and privy council as a result of the directors' orders were as follows: on goods leaving St. Thomas, six per cent.; on incoming European goods, four per cent.; on incoming West Indian goods, two per cent.; on all provisions from New England, four per cent.[29]

The results of the planters' mission of 1706 were on the whole meager enough, yet in 1714–1715, when the planters felt their situation again becoming desperate, they proceeded as before to send a delegation to Copenhagen. The pressure of hard times was already being felt in the West Indies; the home country was fully occupied with the Northern War against Sweden under Charles XII; in St. Thomas prizes and confiscated cargoes ceased being brought into the harbor. The Spaniards on Porto Rico and the larger islands upon whom the planters depended for cash were suffering severely, for it had been more than two years since the Spanish fleet had visited them.[30] What cash the planters were able to get hold of went for provisions; they were concerned with keeping alive the slaves they had, rather than with buying new ones.

When under these conditions the Company insisted on retaining the hated twenty-five per cent. tax on the property of persons leaving the island, feeling among the planters ran high. In numerous secret meetings the Company and its St. Thomas

[27] *B. & D., 1717–20,* copy (November 5, 1707).

[28] The letter mentioned "*de gepretendeerde 6% penning, het welcke uyt de brief kan gesien worden, is opgehoven,*" which, if the copy be accurate, may possibly refer to the sixth "*penning*" tax. But the tax seems to have remained in force nevertheless.

[29] *Cop. og Extr., S. P. for St. Th., 1699–1714* (April 2, 1708).

[30] *B. & D., 1714–17* (August 10, 1714).

representatives came in for most severe denunciation. In May and July, 1714, leading citizens made a strong plea to the governor and council requesting the return of various former privileges which they had enjoyed in Governor Lorentz's time and before, and they threatened in case of refusal to send their deputies to Denmark to lay the matter directly before the king.[31]

This threat was finally carried out when, early in 1715, a commission of three influential planters, George Carstensen, Jacob Magens and John Johnson de Windt, set out for Copenhagen to represent the planters at the Danish court.[32] The independent spirit shown by the West Indian planters had alarmed the local officials, who were quick to scent a conspiracy against the government. In their report to the directors, the governor and council charged one James Smith, son of the erstwhile Brandenburg factor Peter Smith,[33] with being the main author of the disturbance, the inheritance of a portion of his father's fortune having affected his interests. In their desire to expose the character of the ringleaders, the local officials alleged that James Smith had been treasurer of the Scotch Darien Company,[34] and that when its trade had been ruined by the English, he had escaped with the treasury's money.[35]

The delegates from St. Thomas arrived in Copenhagen in the summer of 1715, determined to secure some definite concessions and not to permit any such failure as had occurred in 1706. Besides the remission of the twenty-five per cent., and the substitution for it of the usual six per cent. tax on all goods exported, they petitioned to be permitted to ship out their products to whatever port they pleased. They asked, as in 1706, that representatives of the planters be consulted by the governor

[31] *B. & D., 1714–17* (July 11, 1714). Those signing the communication of July 11 were: L. Beverhoudt, Johannes Seits, Jan Jansen de Windt, Daniel Jansen, David Bourdeaux, Johannes Cramieuw, Hans Kröyer, Tobias van Wondergem and Ja[me]s Smidt (Smith).

[32] *Vest. Reg., 1699–1746* (April 14, 1716). George Carstensen became the founder of a distinguished line of Danish nobility, the Castenskjolds. He was a nephew of Governor Lorentz.

[33] See above, pp. 113, 115.

[34] See above, p. 119.

[35] *B. & D., 1714–17* (August 10, 1714).

and council on matters pertaining to the land and its inhabitants. They requested permission, on behalf of the members of the Reformed or Calvinist faith, for the latter to elect their own minister. They asked as had the delegates of 1706 that the government take measures to secure satisfaction from Spain for slaves escaped to Porto Rico and for ships seized by the Spanish, French, and English during the War of the Spanish Succession. They requested more efficient assistance from the Company in the prevention of runaways and a remission of the interest on slaves bought in 1707.[36]

These various desires and grievances were presented in the form of memorials or petitions to the directors and to the king. The memorial to the former was dated September 2, 1715, and to this the directors made reply on October 28 following.[37] King Frederick IV referred the matter for further investigation to royal commissions, including the Board of Police and Trade. The St. Thomas delegates remained in Copenhagen through the winter of 1715–1716 and succeeded in getting definite statements from both the Company and the crown on all the points in dispute. A commission was appointed by the king on April 14, 1716, consisting of privy councilors Christian Sehested and Frederick Christian Adeler, supreme court judge and councilor in chancery Christian Berregaard, and Jens Kuur, a member of the Copenhagen city council.[38] This body really acted as arbiter in the dispute between the planters and the Company. The king's resolution on each of the disputed points was handed down on August 16, 1716.

The mission of 1715–1716 was certainly productive of result. The tax on the property of persons leaving St. Thomas was reduced from twenty-five to ten per cent. Trade was thrown open to St. Thomas inhabitants on payment of six per cent. for outgoing, and five per cent. for incoming goods. On these terms the inhabitants of St. Thomas were to be permitted to trade with all places except the Danish European lands and

[36] It is not clear just why this was asked for. *Mariager MS.*, 119.

[37] *Comp. Prot., 1697–1734* (October 28, 1715).

[38] *Vest. Reg., 1699–1746* (April 14, 1716). *Assessor* and *Cancellie-Raad* were the Danish names for Berregaard's offices.

Hamburg and Bremen, but were expected to assist the Company in securing full cargoes, though at market rates, instead of the discount of one-sixth which the directors had held out for. The planters' attempt to secure a legal standing as a legislative body for their common court failed, although the king ordered that their decisions were to be appealed to the directors, thus depriving the governor and council of their judicial functions. The king approved the directors' proposal to issue a letter of presentation (*Kaldsbrev*) to any suitable Reformed Church minister nominated by the St. Thomas congregation. With regard to slave refugees in Porto Rico, to runaways on St. Thomas, and to seizures made by various nations during the late war, the authorities joined in promising assistance. The interest on the debt due for slaves purchased in 1707 was not remitted, but reduced from eight to six per cent. Speedier handling of probate cases was promised.[39]

This outcome, on the whole favorable to the planters, was partly due to the vigorous championship of their interests by a committee of the Board of Police and Trade, which the king had deputed to report upon the case.[40] The whole-hearted sympathy which this body showed towards the planters indicates an intelligent grasp of commercial matters considerably in advance of that generally held in Danish administrative circles of the early eighteenth century. The planters' victory was gained in the face of bitter opposition from Governor Michael Crone, who had counselled banishment and fines for the leaders if actual revolution was to be averted and the Company was to be saved from ruin.[41] In view of Crone's questionable dealings with privateers and the care with which he looked after his own fortunes, while he neglected the interests of the

[39] For the king's resolution on each of the matters in dispute, see *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI., "*Udtog af en Kongelig Resolution . . .*" (August 24, 1716). *Cf. Mariager MS.*, pp. 120 *et seq.*

[40] The members were: Niels Slange, Johan Bertram Ernst, Andreas Franck, Christian Braem, Morten Munck, Markus Johansen, and Abraham Klöcker. *Politi og Commerce Collegiets Memorial Bog*, vol. 21 (1716–1720), in City Hall archives, Copenhagen. See *Appendix F*, pp. 306–314, for translation of this report.

[41] Crone to Directors (February 19, 1715), *B. & D., 1714–17.*

Company, it is possible to comprehend why the king's commissioners disregarded the governor's advice. In fact, two of the St. Thomas delegates, George Carstensen and Jacob Magens, were appointed by the directors to examine into Governor Crone's official stewardship.[42] Crone, happily for himself, died before the investigation could be instituted.

Troubles between planters and those governing them were not confined to St. Thomas during the years after the War of the Spanish Succession. The class of planter-capitalists which in Walpole's time largely dominated English colonial policy seems during these years first to have become conscious of its power in various West Indian islands. Governor Erik Bredal of St. Thomas, in a letter to the directors dated March 13, 1718, reported that the Portuguese had exiled their governor to St. Thomas, possibly the Portuguese island by that name off the Guinea coast of Africa, that the French on Martinique had driven off their "general," and that a similar fate had met the Dutch "general" on St. Eustatius. The times were indeed "quite fatal" for West Indian governors. Bredal wrote from first-hand knowledge, for he himself had had to imprison a planter who had proposed sending him to Porto Rico.[43]

The increased freedom in trade resulted in a short-lived "boom" in St. Thomas. Despite the attempts made by French, English and Spanish to restrict trade to their own nationalities,[44] and despite numerous seizures by Porto Rico authorities,[45] St. Thomas traders were willing to assume risks which the Company could not. New England shipyards furnished vessels by means of which St. Thomas planters ran the gauntlet of pirates and men-of-war, and not infrequently evaded successfully the vigilance of the West Indian authorities whose business it was to guard the interests of their European masters.[46] On the

[42] *Comp. Prot., 1697–1734* (October 25, 1715). Crone had connived with Governor Rivera of Porto Rico in carrying on forbidden trade. *Cf.* Bredal, etc., to Directors (November 24, 1716), *B. & D., 1717–20.*

[43] *B. & D., 1717–20* (March 13, 1718). The planter's name was Pieter Krul.

[44] *Ibid.* (June 11, 1719).

[45] *Ibid.* (February 12, 1719).

[46] *Ibid.* (March 13, 1718). Among others, Lucas Beverhoudt had a vessel built in Boston for trade between the West Indies and Holland.

Danish West Indian as on the Dutch and other islands, smuggling early became a fine art, one of the approved ways to wealth and affluence and even to titles of nobility.

The results of this more liberal policy were soon reflected in increase of trade, especially with the Dutch and with the English colonists on the mainland, who were adepts at wriggling through the meshes of eighteenth-century commercial regulations. The visiting Dutch traders, always willing to sell their wares on credit, were eminently successful among the St. Thomas planters. An era of extravagance ensued, which the Company tried in vain to combat. Plantation magnates sent their children to the northern English colonies or to Europe for their schooling, and when they had acquired independent fortunes the planters themselves retired to Holland or Denmark to enjoy them.

The conditions under which these distant colonies were settled and developed give their fiscal history peculiar interest, and likewise complicate it not a little. Besides the duties on imports and exports already referred to, the planters had to pay certain direct, and a considerable number of indirect, taxes. In order to encourage planters to come to St. Thomas and St. John, it had been necessary to promise them eight years of exemption from poll and land taxes.[47] No one was free from militia duty, however, though a number sent proxies. The planters preferred serving in the militia to supporting a considerable body of Danish troops.[48] Of the latter alternative, there was little danger, for the Company had difficulty in keeping a full complement of men at the fort, and those employed were too frequently the riffraff of Copenhagen, who were often such inveterate imbibers of kill-devil that they became worse than useless. "They are indeed so wretched," wrote Governor Bredal in 1716, " that they cannot be trusted any longer at their posts; they get so drunk that they fall off the walls where they stand on duty, some falling to their death, some so injuring themselves that they are unable for a long time to do their work. Others desert their posts in the hope of getting a chance to leave

[47] See above, p. 69, for reference to Governor Adolph Esmit's order.

[48] See above, p. 101, for Thormöhlen's experience with the planters.

the place. . . ."[49] Few soldiers ever lived to return to Denmark, and very few became landowners, though a number became managers of plantations.

So long as the planters were compelled to ship their products to Europe in the Company's vessels, an excessive freight rate became itself a species of tax. A form of taxation most heartily detested by the colonists, however, was the sort that was levied through underpaying the planters for their products. It was to evade such taxes that the latter fought persistently for greater freedom of trade than was being allowed them, and for a place in the local law-making body. The one tax that gave the planter least reason for just complaint because of any measurable inequality in its incidence, was the poll and land tax.[50] The slaves represented the planters' chief investment, and the ability of the owners to pay could generally be calculated with reasonable accuracy by the number of slaves in their possession.

The colonists were naturally concerned chiefly in securing the best price possible for their sugar, cotton, indigo, tobacco, and other products. The highest prices were generally to be obtained from Dutch or English interlopers; hence in order to insure cargoes for the Company's ships, the privy council would sometimes proceed to raise to the necessary level the duties on goods exported. Planters who were in the Company's debt were usually obliged to offer their produce to the Company before trying to sell it to any outside buyer, but well-to-do planters did not fear at times to refuse to sell the Company any sugar whatever.[51] Under such circumstances, the local officials were occasionally forced to borrow from a visiting skipper the sugar required to make up a cargo.[52] The directors had insisted from the first on the prior right to buy all plantation products,[53] but they were forced as time went on to relax that end of their monopoly little by little. Finally in 1724 the Com-

[49] *B. & D., 1714–17* (April 29, 1716).
[50] See above, p. 196.
[51] *S. P. for St. Th.* (July 9, 1714).
[52] *B. & D., 1714–17* (August 10, 1714).
[53] *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI, 1703–1709 (April 2, 1708).

pany gave up its monopoly of all trade at St. Thomas except that in slaves, permitting the ships of all nations to buy and sell there on payment of the six per cent. export and five per cent. import tax fixed in the royal edict of August 24, 1716.[54] This appears to mark the beginning of St. Thomas as a free port.

After the acquisition of St. Croix, the question of how the sugar and cotton prices should be fixed became one of prime political importance in the Danish islands. Before 1735 the planters tried to secure current prices for their products by unofficial means, since they had no recognized legislative powers.

As a source of income the Company's magazine at St. Thomas played some part. It was impossible to retain the monopoly of the retail trade so long as Danish ships could not furnish the island with all its needed supplies and provisions. Plantation implements came in large part from English and French sources, and provisions chiefly from New England and New York. During the Spanish Succession war, when numerous prizes and prize cargoes were brought to St. Thomas for sale, the Company lost a good deal of its retail trade to those local planter-merchants who were willing to undertake war risks. By 1725 it had given up almost all of this trade except its traffic in slaves.

It was the duty of the local factor to keep the officials in Copenhagen informed concerning the goods likely to be in demand in the West Indies. A list of articles found enumerated in the Company's books for 1717 will give an idea of the contents of its magazine. Among the provisions on hand were salt beef, pork, maize, sweet potatoes, palm oil, cassava, pepper, spices, cacao, tea, bread, flour, butter, sweetmeats, wine, vinegar, beer (*Lybsk Öl*) kill-devil, and spirits (*aquavita*). There were also to be found pitch, rope, sailcloth, and thread for the use of ships in the harbor; shingles, lumber, brick, tile-stones and nails for building houses, and tallow for lighting them. For the planter's wife and daughter the factor had in stock laces, linens and cotton prints. To the planter himself, who rode on his daily inspection tour, the magazine offered a saddle.[55]

[54] See above, p. 152. *Ibid., 1723–1731* (October 21, 1724).

[55] *N. J. for St. Th.* for 1717.

Closely associated with the Company's fiscal policy, but less firmly under its control, was the matter of money. Part of the metal dug out of Spanish mines in America was diverted by Dutch and other interlopers into the channels of West Indian and European trade. Spanish merchants gladly parted with hard Spanish pieces-of-eight for negroes or provisions; their own skippers could not keep pace with the supply, and Spanish planters were willing to pay good prices for those commodities. The greater number of the coins that were in circulation in the West Indies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries bore on their face the titles of the king of Spain. Spanish milled dollars circulated freely in the trade of Boston, New York and Philadelphia with the West Indies long after the English colonies had gained their independence.

Within each of the different groups of colonies, the money of the home state was supposed to circulate. Hence various kinds of coin crept into general use, to the confusion of commerce and the joy of the professional money-changer.

St. Thomas suffered its most severe financial disturbance during the years of universal money stringency following the Peace of Utrecht. As early as 1715, the planters on St. Thomas were unable to pay their export and import dues in coin.[56] Two years later, shortly after the Company's treasurer, Christian Seeberg, had been accused of wholesale peculations by Governor Bredal, the latter reported that there was no money left on St. Thomas. "There is no trade with the Spaniards," he wrote, "and the English have secured the little money that is left, so that the land is poorer than it has ever been. People who are rated as capitalists do not have enough money for the daily expenses of their households. In order to pay our militia and others of our servants, our only resource lies in doing as is being done in Carolina and Canada: namely, to make use of paper bills with the Company's seal in place of money. . . ."

The only other alternative, as the governor intimated in the same letter, would have been barter in sugar and cotton, hardly convenient substitutes for small change. To make legal seizures for debts owed by planters, would merely have brought the

[56] *B. & D., 1714–17* (July 23, 1715).

Company slaves and furniture, which could not have been used in paying the Company's employees.[57]

The crisis was thus tided over by paper money issues, but not without inconvenience and loss. In 1722 Governor Bredal issued an order requiring possessors of "false paper bills" to present them for signing within fourteen days, on pain of confiscation.[58] In 1724, in the seventh year of their use, Governor Frederick Moth and his council took measures for the withdrawal and confiscation of the old notes, which were scarcely recognizable any longer, and proceeded to the issue of new ones that were less easily raised.[59] The governor and council decided to issue 2,000 bills of each of the following denominations: one, two, four, and eight reals.[60] Counting eight reals to each piece-of-eight brings the sum thus issued to 3,750 pieces-of-eight, which was equivalent to the same number of rixdollars.

Two years later a new issue worth 1,000 *rdl.* more replaced the above,[61] but the planters began to demand twenty-five per cent. higher prices for their produce when paid in paper money. This caused the local officials to take measures for the redemption of the bills by accepting them at their face value in payment of debts to the Company. On March 21, 1727, Philip Gardelin, the factor at St. Thomas, requested the retirement and destruction of the paper money. His suggestion was accepted, and after a decade of experience the Company went back to a hard money footing.[62] The financial stringency that had prompted the experiment had disappeared. The Company had avoided the disaster that befell the French and English companies of this period by refraining from issuing more paper money than it was able to absorb in the course of its business.

Far more permanent as a medium of exchange were the so-

[57] Bredal to Directors (September 27, 1717). *B. & D., 1717–20.*

[58] *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. I, 1684–1744 (July 27, 1722).

[59] *S. P. for St. Th.* (May 11, October 12, 1724); *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI, 1723–1739 (October 12, 1724).

[60] *S. P. for St. Th.* (October 12, 1724).

[61] *Ibid.* (July 30, 1726).

[62] *Ibid.* (March 21, 1727). The half-tone engravings of Danish and colonial coins planned for this volume have had to be omitted, as the Danish museum coin collections have been stored away until the close of the war.

called "Seeberg dollars." The silver ware and plate of the defaulting treasurer had been cut into convenient sizes and stamped, and some of the money thus created continued in circulation after the Danish West India and Guinea Company had passed out of existence.

In spite of wars and panics, the Company had during the first third of the new century not only held St. Thomas, but had acquired and settled St. John. It had seen the rise of a class of capitalist planters, and had at the same time been able to pay its shareholders a twelve per cent. dividend in 1714 and salaries to the directors and chief participants for their service from 1696 on.[63] In 1721 it had been able to pay an eight per cent. dividend, but no "*Salarium proportionaliter.*" No further dividends were declared until 1734, when the purchase of St. Croix made other arrangements necessary.

With two little islands in its possession but both gradually decreasing in fertility, with a restless planter population which insisted most strenuously upon its rights, and with a trade that could scarcely supply more than one or two ships a year with cargoes, it became evident to live Danish business men that a fresh start of some sort would soon have to be made to prevent utter stagnation. The opportunity came when French interest in the affair of the Polish Succession suggested to French statesmen that Danish neutrality and Danish money might be secured by offering to Denmark-Norway the all but abandoned island of St. Croix. The acquisition of this fertile island marks the beginning of a new era in Danish West Indian history, which it will be the purpose of the succeeding chapters to describe.

[63] *Mariager MS.*, 117.

CHAPTER X

THE ACQUISITION OF ST. CROIX

THE acquisition by Denmark of the island of St. Croix in 1733 may properly be viewed in the nature of a windfall. This small but precious tropical fruit fell into Denmark's lap during one of those capricious diplomatic storms which shook the chanceries of Europe from 1723 to 1733. During this decade an intriguing and ambitious Italian woman, Elizabeth Farnese, seated on the throne of Spain as the consort of the incompetent Philip V, "was the pivot upon which the diplomacy of Europe turned." Failing in her efforts to bring about a marriage alliance between France and Spain, Elizabeth through her minister, the Dutch adventurer, Ripperdâ, managed to effect an alliance with Austria in 1725 by which among other things Spain was to secure the restoration of Gibraltar and Minorca, and Austria was to receive Spanish support for her Ostend East India Company. This reversal of alliances, which brought together two of the chief opponents of the Spanish Succession war, threatened the revival of the empire of Charles the Fifth. By way of restoring the "balance of power" and averting the dangerous consequences of such a combination, the representatives of France, England, and Prussia met at Herrenhausen where later in the same year they formed what became known as the League of Hanover. They were subsequently joined by Sweden, Denmark, and the United Provinces.

It was the marriage of the young and weakly Louis XV to Maria Leszczynska, the daughter of Stanislas Leszczynski, ex-king of Poland, that had definitely terminated Elizabeth's schemes for a French-Spanish alliance. The inopportune death of Augustus II of Poland on February 1, 1733, left France as the chief champion of the rights of Stanislas to the Polish throne. The question of the aged, peace-loving Cardinal Fleury, "Must we ruin the king to aid his father-in-law?" was ignored. France

consequently found herself in the difficult position of guarantor of a royal candidate who was opposed by the arms of Russia and Saxony, both of which states were actively backing the Saxon candidate, Augustus.

Since Austria supported Russia and Saxony, Cardinal Fleury expected Sweden to attack her inveterate enemy, Russia, while he looked for Denmark, which controlled the entrance to the Baltic, at least to remain neutral. This would permit the French fleet to enter the Baltic and thus come to the aid of Stanislas.

The negotiations of France with Denmark were carried on by Count Plélo,[1] who had been sent to Copenhagen in 1728, where he had become very popular because of his knowledge of Danish history and his acquaintance with northern literary and scientific men.[2] Plélo's task was not an easy one, for only eight months before the death of the Polish king Denmark had concluded a treaty of friendship and alliance with Russia and Austria at Copenhagen, with a view towards securing a favorable settlement of the vexing questions concerning Denmark's relations with the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein.

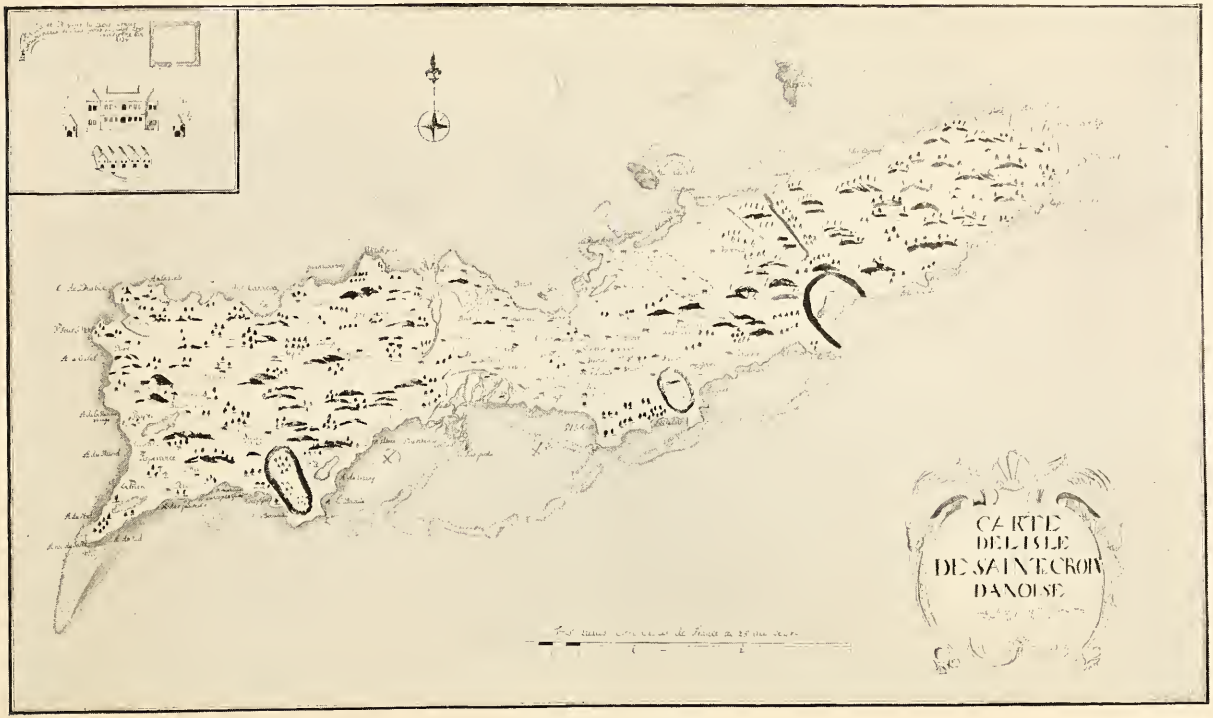
Under these conditions, the Danish court was obliged to move with circumspection. Austria must not be offended, for Holstein was within the Empire; France must not be turned away entirely, for there was no telling when French support might become very desirable for Denmark. The Danish king, Christian VI, managed to draw out the negotiations until March 27, 1734, when he definitely refused the French offer of alliance;[3] but meantime the island of St. Croix had been purchased from France for the Danish West India and Guinea Company. This enabled France to secure needed funds for carrying on her war in Poland, and the Danish company to gain a new and fertile island.

The ten or twelve years following the collapse of the Mississippi and South Sea companies were years when money went

[1] Louis Robert Hypolite de Brehan, Comte de Plélo.

[2] It was during Plélo's stay in Copenhagen that Ludwig (*Louis*) Holberg, Denmark-Norway's great dramatist and historian, was laying the foundations of a national drama in the Danish capital.

[3] For conditions preceding the purchase of St. Croix, see L. Koch, *Christian den Sjettes Historie* (Kjöbenhavn, 1886), pp. 257 *et seq.*



MAP OF ST. CROIX
(MS. Map, 1734 [?], Royal Library, Copenhagen)

[*Facing page 202*]

into hiding and was exceedingly difficult to coax out. A time when it was common to resort to paper money to carry on the minimum of necessary trade was not favorable to the prosperity of commercial companies. Under the successors of Governor Bredal,[4] the Danish West India and Guinea Company, unable to pursue an aggressive commercial policy, gradually relinquished its monopoly in favor of private traders and proceeded to collect as many as possible of its outstanding debts. Even in the slave trade, its one remaining source of profit, headway was very difficult. A number of poor crops, due to drought and other causes, left the planters with little surplus to invest in slaves.

The East India Company too was practically at a standstill. Its low estate was ascribed mainly to the Northern War and to the plague in Copenhagen in 1711. In the course of an investigation Frederick IV sent a letter under date of November 9, 1726, to the investigating commission asking them to report upon the advisability of uniting the two India companies.[5] The commission was dissolved in 1728 without having achieved any tangible result.[6]

When Christian VI came to the throne in 1730, the prospects for the India companies began to improve. As crown prince, Christian had already shown a live interest in these ventures. In the East India Company he had held the presidency and on April 12, 1732, within two years after his accession, that company was reorganized as "The Royal Chartered East Indian or Asiatic Company."[7] The West India Company's opportunity for rehabilitation came when the directors saw the chance to buy the island of St. Croix from France.

In 1732, at the time that Plélo's negotiations with the Danish

[4] Commander Otto J. Thambsen was governor for a few months in 1724; Captain Frederick Moth, until 1727; and Henry Suhm, until 1733, when Philip Gardelin became governor (February 21).

[5] The committee consisted of August Friderich von John and Daniel Benjamin Weyse, with Andreas Höyer as secretary. *Hist. Saml. og Studier . . .* H. Rördam, ed. (Kjöbenhavn, 1878), 4 B. III, pp. 144 *et seq.*

[6] E. Holm, *Danmark-Norges Historie i Frederick IV's sidste ti Regeringsaar,* pp. 439 *et seq.*

[7] Kay Larsen, *De dansk-ostindiske Koloniers Historie,* I, 73.

court were under way, the directorate of the West India Company consisted of Ferdinand Anthon (Count of Laurwigen), councilors of state Severin Junge and Christian Berregaard, Hans J. Soelberg, and Gregorius Klauman. The chief participants were Frederick Seckman and the mayor of Copenhagen, Frederick Holmsted.[8] When the president, Laurwigen, presented his resignation to the shareholders on September 12, 1732, the latter immediately began the search for another "high minister" and instructed councilor of justice Frederick L. Dose to sound "his High Excellency," privy councilor Charles Adolph von Plessen in the matter.[9] From September until the following April (1733), von Plessen kept his own counsel, but he set to work informing himself on the state of the Company and the possibilities for its improvement.

Von Plessen had conferred with Holmsted during the interval and had found that the Company was scarcely able to pay interest on its debts, and the stockholders still less able to secure returns on the capital invested. He had "studied such proposals, ways, and means as could be suggested, not only to assist, rescue, and support the Company, but also [such as would help] to place it on a sounder basis." [10]

Commerce to and from the West Indies, "especially in these times of general peace" was indeed according to Holmsted's admission entirely demoralized; St. Thomas bought its goods direct from other lands, while the Company was forced to pay the planters 4½ *rdl.* per hundred pounds for their sugar, and from eleven to thirteen shillings a pound for their cotton, higher prices than the planters themselves could secure in Europe, especially for the sugar.

These observations, which von Plessen and the directors communicated to the shareholders at their meeting on May 8, 1733, led his High Excellency to the conclusion "that the lands of the Company are too small and its inhabitants too few and that the colonial administration is on too limited a scale and has not from the beginning been established upon a sufficiently

[8] *Mariager MS.*, pp. 132 *et seq.*
[9] *Comp. Prot., 1697–1734* (September 12, 1732).
[10] *Ibid.*, (May 8, 1734).

well-ordered footing or upon a plan properly suited to carry on commerce successfully with these lands." The only way out that appeared to von Plessen lay in the possibility of the Company's securing the neighboring island of St. Croix, which was at the time in the possession of France.

The suggestion thus skillfully presented by a man so distinguished in rank and prestige must have taken the assembled stockholders by surprise, for they had received no dividends since 1721, and many of them had in fact advanced to the Company in 1723 loans amounting to thirty per cent. of their stock, and received in return the Company's notes yielding six per cent. interest.[11] The sort of confidence instilled into the minds of the Company's "general court" as they listened to the courageous proposals of a high official who was willing to stake his reputation upon the success of his scheme, must have been comparable to that produced in a meeting of the board of directors of a run-down railway in these days when a Hill or a Morgan offers to pull them out of the slough.

When von Plessen appeared before the stockholders in May, 1733, the entire plan as he presented it was known only to the king, who had given it his approval, to Holmsted and himself and to "a couple of confidential friends whom Mr. Holmsted had employed," and of course to Count Plélo. Although secrecy was still enjoined, he was able to announce that Holmsted had brought the negotiations to the point where the island could be secured for 164,000 "French crowns" (*écus?*). This included the advantage of an "alliance or treaty" with France, providing for "mutual obligation and neutrality in all cases, perpetual friendship in America regardless of the situation in Europe, and mutual defense and succor if need be against all who might attempt to disturb the American establishments, colonies, and commerce of these nations. . . ." Whether or not a treaty of alliance actually was contemplated in these preliminary negotiations is not entirely clear from the minutes of the Company.

It was assumed by those who had begun the negotiations that the island was well worth buying. Von Plessen estimated

[11] *Comp. Prot., 1697–1734* (May 8, 1734) ¶9.

that the island when surveyed would be found to contain not fewer than 800 large plantations besides many smaller ones; that it would yield cacao, indigo, and coffee, as well as sugar and cotton; and that the land was of such a high quality that the plantations would be worth from 500 to 1,000 *rdl.* from the beginning. He expressed the belief that there would be no lack of purchasers, and that the 164,000 *rdl.* needed would come back within a few years.

Granted that the shareholders were willing to concede the value of the island, the questions of next greatest importance were those which dealt with the readjustment of the Company's internal affairs on the basis of the new conditions. How were the shares in the new investment to be distributed? What special privileges should purchasers of the new shares enjoy? How should the Company provide for the payment of the purchase price? To what extent should trade be free and on what branches of commerce should the Company hold the monopoly? At what price should the old shares be estimated and how should holders of shares in the recently established refinery be treated?

All of these questions were suggested by von Plessen at the general assembly held on May 8, and he sketched out tentative answers, but the shareholders were not ready as yet to express their opinions on every one of them. They did however vote in favor of the purchase, and made arrangements for securing voluntary subscriptions to stock, the preference to be given to holders of the old shares.

On May 13 the various groups met once more in general assembly. During the five-day interval, a committee of shareholders [12] had discussed the mooted points with the directors [13] and the chief participants,[14] and the following resolutions were presented, and received the approval of the assembly when it met on May 15. (1) The Company's old shares, about eighty-four in number, with a par value of 1,000 *rdl.* each, were to be

[12] "Councilors of Conference" Lars Benzon and Christian Berregaard, and Councilors of State Phillip Julius Bornemann and Thomas Bartholin.

[13] Councilor of Conference Severin Junge, Hans Jörgen Soelberg, and Gregorius Klauman.

[14] "Chancery director" Frederick Sechman and Frederick Holmsted.

reduced to 500 *rdl.* a share, by way of encouraging the buyers of shares in the Company and the refinery; (2) the value of the shares in the sugar refinery was to be raised from 600 to 1,000 *rdl.* each, and persons investing for the first time were to have the right to buy them; (3) after June 11 the above shares were to be combined into single shares on the basis already resolved upon, and the profits from Company and refinery put into the common treasury; (4) the possessor of each old share was to advance 2,000 *rdl.* towards the purchase of the island, and to receive in return two plantations on St. Croix, each of them 3,000 feet long and 2,000 feet wide; (5) the 2,000 *rdl.* was to constitute part of each full share and be combined with the 1,000 *rdl.* in refinery, and 500 *rdl.* in Company, shares; (6) it was agreed that the stockholders should have the opportunity if they desired it of selling the plantations assigned to them before the Company began disposing of its plantations; (7) those failing to fall in line were given the chance to dispose of their refinery and Company shares within eight days on pain of confiscation; (8) the outstanding debts were not to be interfered with; (9) the dividends on the sugar refinery and the old shares were fixed at seven per cent. beginning with June 11, 1733, but from the 2,000 *rdl.* investment, each was to receive such returns as the tide of fortune might bring him; and finally (10) after the shares should all have been paid up, the Company pledged itself not to force any shareholder to advance money to the Company against his will.[15]

Thus was the Danish West India and Guinea Company once more reorganized to meet the demands of a new time. Many things had happened since Governor Lorentz urged the directors to take up the activities laid down by Thormöhlen and Arff, and counseled them to push with vigor the promising Guinea trade. While the reorganization of 1697 was made chiefly with a view towards the slave-trade, that of 1733–1734 looked rather in the direction of plantation development and of the monopoly in the business of refining and distributing sugar in Denmark-Norway.

[15] *Comp. Prot., 1697–1734* (May 13, 1733). *Mariager MS.* (pp. 140 *et seq.*) follows the minutes of the Company almost literally here.

The treaty with France, which was concluded at Copenhagen by Plélo and Holmsted June 15, 1733, and ratified by Louis XV just thirteen days later, provided for the purchase of St. Croix from the French by the Company but said nothing of any alliance with France.[16] It arranged for the payment of 750,000 livres [17] in French coin, half to be paid in cash on the exchange of ratifications and the remainder in eighteen months.

In their general assembly of August 8, the shareholders were officially notified by the directors of the consummation of the treaty, and they accepted the directors' plans for raising the money. The time that was to be allowed to the holders of the old shares to participate in the new plan was extended, so that those within the city were allowed another fortnight, and those in the provinces, six weeks, to pay up the required sum. Holders of old shares were to be given six months' time before they were to be required to give a final answer to the notification of the directors. Meantime the king, through privy councilor and director of finances Christian Louis von Plessen (brother of Charles Adolph), had offered to loan the Company such sums as might be necessary to complete the payments to France.[18]

The plans of the directors for taking over St. Croix from the French "general" at Martinique, for having the island surveyed and laid out into "quarters" and plantations, and for giving four instead of two plantations to those investing 2,000 *rdl.*, were presented to the assembled shareholders, and accepted by them in their meeting of September 26, 1733.[19]

By way of assuring the reorganized Company a market for its West Indian cargoes, the king had issued an order on July 4, 1733, providing that private refineries should be required thereafter to buy their raw sugar from the Danish islands as long as that source of supply held out.[20] This move in the Company's

[16] For full text of treaty and *pleinpouvoirs*, see Höst, 98 *et seq.*

[17] This amounted in Danish coin to 141,926 *rdl.*, 52 *st.*, according to *Comp. Prot., 1697–1734* (September 26, 1733).

[18] *Comp. Prot., 1697–1734* (August 8, 1733).

[19] *Ibid.* (September 26, 1733); *Mariager MS.*, p. 145.

[20] No one refinery was to be allowed to lower the price of sugar without consulting the others. This was evidently intended to protect the Company's refinery established in 1728.

favor was followed on December 11 by royal permission to arrange for the purchase of either or both of the two privately owned refineries in Copenhagen,[21] and for their incorporation into the Company. Within four years the Company's monopoly of the refining business was practically complete, subject only to restrictions imposed by the king in the public interest. The quality of the sugar was to be maintained at as high a standard as hitherto, its price was to remain at a reasonable ratio with the current price of raw sugar, and the Company was to be allowed to put up a brandy and liquor distillery in which syrup and sugar, and not grain, were to be used.[22]

When the Company was ready to take actual possession of St. Croix, the capital it had at its disposal was as follows:

73½ old (reduced) shares	@	500 *rdl.*	36,750 *rdl.*
117½ sugar refinery shares	@	1,000 "	117,500 "
147 St. Croix shares	@	500 "	73,500 " [23]

The available capital, which amounted to a total of 227,750 *rdl.*, represented nearly three times the amount invested in the Company before its reorganization was begun. The enthusiasm and practical business sense of Frederick Holmsted and Charles Adolph von Plessen had overcome the apathy of a considerable part of the investing public. They had seen to it that the Company's interests in Denmark were properly safeguarded and coördinated with its interests in the West Indies.

It is proper at this time to turn to the West Indies and to the circumstances connected with the occupation of St. Croix itself. While these weighty matters were being considered in Copenhagen, St. John, which had been settled only about fifteen years before,[24] was about to become the scene of the terrible slave insurrection, the course of which has already been pointed out.[25] For six awful months, while the directors were laboring to induce shy investors to place their funds in West India Company

[21] These were owned by the Weyse and Pelt families.
[22] *Mariager MS.*, pp. 147 *et seq.*
[23] *Ibid.*, 150.
[24] See above, p. 128.
[25] Chapter VIII.

stock, the planters of St. Thomas and St. John were struggling for their very existence. The part played by the French from Martinique, who learned of the sale of St. Croix before the Danes on St. Thomas received the information, and how they helped to put down the rebellion, have likewise been discussed in the preceding pages.

St. Croix had already had an eventful history. According to Bryan Edwards, the English historian of the West Indies, Dutch and English settlers occupied it in 1625.[26] They appear to have been joined there by some French refugees from St. Christopher (St. Kitts). A civil war between the factions resulted in the expulsion of the Dutch and the French shortly before 1650. In August of that year, a Spanish expedition from Porto Rico drove off the English.[27] The Spaniards had hardly established themselves there before de Poincy, the lieutenant-general of all the French islands in America, sent a force of about one hundred and sixty-six men from St. Christopher's to oust the Spaniards. The effort succeeded, and the settlement of St. Croix by the French was begun by a group of three hundred colonists who were sent thither the following year.[28]

From 1651 to 1664, when the French West India Company was established under the initiative of Colbert, St. Croix was under the proprietorship of the Knights of Malta, who, however, ruled it in the name of Louis XIV. In 1695, while Louis was defending himself against the English and the Dutch and their allies of the Augsburg League, the entire colony was moved to San Domingo.[29] From that date until the Danish purchase, it is referred to in maps and texts as an abandoned island.

The Company's servants on St. Thomas had for some time cast longing glances towards St. Croix, whose deserted hillsides they could see faintly on the horizon from the slopes that rose to the northward from St. Thomas bay. In 1725, Governor Moth, in a letter to the directors, mentioned having heard a

[26] *History of the British West Indies*, I, 184.

[27] Du Tertre, *Histoire des Antilles*, I, 448 (quoted in J. Knox, *op. cit.*, 27).

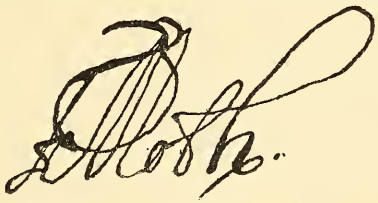
[28] Du Tertre, I, 409–413, II, 32, 33, 37 (quoted in Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, 44).

[29] Keller, *Colonization*, 498; J. Knox, *op. cit.*, 39.

report that the English intended shortly to occupy the island.[30] In the following year, Moth wrote that "Ste. Crüds [St. Croix] still lies uninhabited. If said island belonged to the Danes, or could be secured by them, the Company would in time become powerful, and I assure [you] that there would be no dearth of inhabitants as soon as permission for its settlement should be granted.

"I have heard that some distinguished gentlemen in Denmark have offered 100,000 *rdl.* for it, which sum it is easily worth, but I take the liberty to explain to the gentlemen [the directors] that in case Ste. Crüds fell into the hands of private persons and was granted freedom [of trade] by the king, then St. Thomas and St. John would be ruined within three years; but on the other hand, if the Company could receive it, both lands [St. Thomas [31] and St. Croix] would be the gainers." [32]

This zealous servant of the Company lived to see his hopes realized,—he became, in fact, the first chief instrument for their realization, when the directors in their instructions dated November 16, 1733, named Frederick Moth as the first governor



of St. Croix. The Company's ship *Unity* which bore these instructions and other orders, did not arrive at St. Thomas until June 11, 1734, almost an entire year after the conclusion of the treaty. She had been obliged to put in for repairs at a Norway port on her outward journey, which she had begun on December 3, 1733.[33]

No sooner had Captain Moth received his commission than he

[30] *B. & D., 1724–27* (July 7, 1725).

[31] St. Thomas and St. John were always considered as a unit for administrative purposes.

[32] *Ibid.* (March 6, 1726).

[33] *Mariager MS.*, pp. 156 *et seq.*

commenced preparations for taking over St. Croix. The negro rebellion on St. John had recently been brought under control through the cheerfully rendered assistance of the French; and to many planters who had suffered in consequence of the insurrection, this new island offered the prospect of recouping their lost fortunes. A bark was presently sent off to Martinique to deliver to the general and intendant there a copy of the orders of Louis XV.[34] Because of the danger from hurricanes during the summer months, the French authorities suggested postponing the formal transfer until winter, but expressed their willingness to let the Danes begin actual occupation at once.

On August 31 the Lutheran and Reformed ministers held services in their respective churches for the benefit of the pioneer band that was to leave on the following day. On the two barks and two smaller craft which sailed to St. Croix on this responsible mission, there were, besides Captain Moth and his party (which included several negroes loaned by St. Thomas planters), a number of men sent out on the *Unity* by Charles Adolph von Plessen to begin immediately the cultivation of the plantations allotted to that influential statesman. Thus did his High Excellency show his faith in the Company's future by his own good works.

On September 5, the little band had finished clearing a place near the Basin on the northern side of the island for the fort, which was to be called "Christianswærn,"[35] and on the following day, when the cannon had been placed there, the minister who had accompanied the party preached a sermon, the royal flag was planted, and the king's commission to the new governor was solemnly read as the cannon fired a salute.[36]

Four months later, after the French officials from Martinique had arrived, occurred the formal transfer from France to Denmark. Captain Bonnoust[37] and his party arrived in the harbor

[34] *Mariager MS.*, 157; *Gardelin MSS.* (June 23, 1734). The bark, which sailed about June 23 was in charge of skipper Patrick Laughlin, and the business in the hands of a "Mr. Vass," perhaps Emanuel Vass, a Jew, the only person of that name given in the St. Thomas census for 1733.

[35] *Wærn* = defense.

[36] *Mariager MS.*, 158.

[37] "*Pierre Etaude François Anthoine Preinley, Herre af Bonnoust.*" Höst, 125.

of the Basin of St. Croix on the morning of January 8. They saluted the Danish flag, which had been planted on the point of land near the fort, with nine guns, which the Danes answered shot for shot. On the tenth, after Bonnoust had come ashore with a lieutenant of marine [38] and a notary public, the official ceremonies took place. A French inhabitant of St. Thomas, one Pierre Joseph Pannet,[39] acted as interpreter. About forty St. Croix inhabitants were designated by Moth to append their signatures to the acts of possession that were drawn up.[40] After exchange of full powers and the declaration of Governor Moth that no French inhabitants were settled upon the island, Captain Bonnoust, by virtue of the authority vested in him by the Marquis de Champigny,[41] governor and lieutenant-general of the French Windward Islands, placed Frederick Moth, as the legally designated governor, in full possession of the island in accordance with the terms of the treaty concluded at Copenhagen on June 15, 1733.

By way of symbolizing the authority thus officially conferred upon him, Governor Moth had his soldiers march to the fort under arms, and fire nine cannon shots as the Danish flag waved overhead. He then extinguished a lighted candle, fire was again lighted, plants and herbs were pulled out of the ground, branches were broken from the trees, the water in the brook was tasted, stones were thrown,—all the acts were performed which were needed to indicate that free, full, and perpetual possession of the island had been taken in the name of the Danish West India and Guinea Company under the authority of the Danish king.[42]

Von Plessen and Holmsted had reason to feel proud of their

[38] Marie Barthélemy Benard. Höst, 126.

[39] Or *Panet;* the author of the *Relation* of the St. John insurrection of 1733. See above, p. 169, (n. 37).

[40] Among the persons acting with Moth in various official capacities were Diderich von Ottingen, lieutenant on St. Croix, secretary Lorentz Nissen, surgeon Cornelius Bödger, and militia captain William Chalville. *Mariager MS.*, 159.

[41] "*Herre Jacques Charles Brochard, Ridder, Herre til Champignee, Nauvare, Poincy, Marquis de Ste. Marie.*" Höst, 124.

[42] *Mariager MS.*, 158; Höst, 124 *et seq.*

work. Louis XV expended all that St. Croix had brought him, and more, in a futile attempt to aid his father-in-law. Denmark, on the other hand, thanks to the devoted labors of the above two men, received the title to a fertile island, which has remained in her possession almost without interruption to the present day.

CHAPTER XI

THE COMPANY UNDER THE NEW CHARTER

With the acquisition of St. Croix, the Danish West India and Guinea Company looked forward to a revival in its business affairs. The prestige and enthusiasm of von Plessen and Holmsted did much to raise the hopes of the shareholders, but several years were likely to elapse before the new colony could be expected to yield an appreciable return. Not only was the expense of the St. John slave uprising to be met, but measures had to be taken to prevent the recurrence of such a catastrophe. St. Croix had to be surveyed and a supply of new settlers secured.

The purchase of the new island, and the privileges giving the Company the right to establish a sugar refinery and distillery, prompted Christian VI to grant the reorganized company a new charter on February 5, 1734, to take the place of the provisional charter of two years before.[1] Besides retaining the three West Indian islands, the Company was given all rights to "Crab and other American and African islands." [2] If it so desired, it was to continue in possession of Christiansborg in Guinea, on payment of the usual dues "to the king of Aquambu and the *Cabusiers* of Orsa." The private sugar refiners of Copenhagen were forbidden to buy foreign sugars, and were either to agree with the Company as to the price or pay the current rate brought by St. Thomas sugar in the Amsterdam market, plus the cost of forwarding it to Denmark. Only in case of a shortage were the refineries to be permitted to import sugar, and then they were to pay 10 *sk.* duty for each hundred pounds.[3]

Under the terms of the new charter, the Company was given

[1] The "interim" charter or *octroi* was issued on February 22, 1732.

[2] See Höst, *Efterretninger om Öen Sanct Thomas*, pp. 115 *et seq.*, for an abstract of the entire *octroi*.

[3] ¶ 5.

a monopoly of trade with its islands, and exemption from the Sound and other duties,[4] though it was to pay two and one-half per cent. duty on goods imported into Copenhagen and only one per cent. on those exported from Copenhagen to foreign ports.[5] This was evidently intended to encourage foreign trade and thereby to bring more money into the state. The ships, moneys, or effects of the Company were not to be subject to seizure during war or peace.[6]

The Company was authorized to try all cases arising within its jurisdiction, in a court consisting of three of its own shareholders. Appeals to the supreme court could be made only in cases involving life or honor. Judgments in disputes between the Company and the inhabitants of the islands might come up for review before a body composed of three shareholders, other than the above, and four judges of the supreme court.[7] Wherever the charter failed to cover the situation, the Danish laws were to be considered applicable.[8] The appointments of Reformed and Lutheran ministers of the gospel were, like those of governors, to be confirmed by the king.[9] Toleration of belief continued to be granted, but only the two faiths abovementioned were permitted to hold public worship.[10]

With respect to fiscal matters, some curious provisions were made. Interest was to be fixed at such rates as might be agreed upon between the Company and its creditors,[11] and "tenths" and "sixths" might be assessed or not as the Company desired.[12] Evidently the Company did not propose that the claims made by the planters in 1715 should be revived.

The executive authority in the colonies was to rest with the

[4] "*Compagniets Varer skulle i Kjöbenhavn og Öresund være frie for Told Consumtion, Accise og andre Paalæg, og deres Skibe være frie for Last- og Havne-Penge, etc.*" Höst, 117 (¶ 9).

[5] ¶ 10.

[6] ¶ 12.

[7] ¶ 13.

[8] ¶ 28.

[9] ¶'s 18 and 21.

[10] ¶ 18.

[11] ¶ 17.

[12] ¶ 33.

governor and his council, but in place of the former burgher council or court, there was authorized a lower or town court, and a higher court consisting of the governor and four members of the lower court.[13] The directors in their "orders and provisions" of November 16, 1734, issued a list of privileges to planters, in which the rights of the burgher council were specified in detail. The first members were to be appointed by the governor, and thereafter one was to be retired every three years. Whenever a vacancy occurred, the place was to be filled by the governor from a list of three planters submitted to him by the remaining members of the council.

The burgher council was given the right of conferring with the governor and his council whenever it had any matters to propose concerning the common welfare. These matters were to be presented in writing, and might be forwarded to the directors by the first ship, whether the governor in council offered any reply or not. Although it might thus make its desires known to the authorities in the islands and in Copenhagen, the burgher council had no power of initiative except at the written order of the privy council or the directors.[14] The directors were to find that once they had granted the right to advise, it would be exceedingly difficult to prevent the planters from becoming virtual legislators.

The problem of securing planters for the three hundred plantations which it was proposed to lay out at St. Croix was one of first importance to the Company. The early attempts of the king and the leading stockholders to begin actual work on the pieces of ground allotted to them was an encouraging sign. A few English settlers[15] who had moved to St. Croix before the Danes secured it, signified their willingness to pay for their land, and others from Barbados and the "upper islands" indicated their readiness to come if the conditions laid down were not

[13] ¶ 28.

[14] *Udtog af den Ordre og Anstalt. . . .*" (November 16, 1734), ¶16. *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. III.

[15] A number of the English were reported to have removed to Tortola and Spanishtown, after Moth's arrival at St. Croix. Gardelin, etc., to Directors (December 28, 1734). *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI.

too severe. They were quite opposed to paying the 40 *rdl.* annual land tax asked for by the directors, though the tax was not to be paid until the close of the seven year exemption period.[16] Occasionally poor men who had only from three to half a dozen slaves applied for a chance to buy small tracts, but they were delayed by the instructions of the directors, who wished first to dispose of the two hundred and fifteen sugar plantations belonging to the shareholders.[17]

The penniless man, were he ever so hard-working, could hope for little in the West Indies, which deserved then perhaps more than at present the appellation of "a rich man's heaven and a poor man's hell." A number of families sent from Germany to St. Croix cost the Company more than they were worth. Except for three families that deserved to be called industrious, the men proved to be drunkards, and the women, dirty, lazy, and immoral. "We therefore do not wish to risk," wrote the governor and council, "recommending the sending out of any additional families of that sort." [18] The proposal to encourage refugee debtors to come to St. Croix was not favorably entertained by the local authorities, who, eager to secure sober, industrious folk, suggested that they should not exceed twenty-four years of age, and that not fewer than one hundred be sent with each ship "if it is to do any good, inasmuch as half of them will no doubt die off."[19]

As the surveying of sugar and cotton plantations neared its completion in the summer of 1735,[20] work on the forts was pushed forward on all three islands. On St. John, where the Company had been taken severely to task by the planters for the inadequacy of the fort during the recent insurrection, a fort one hundred feet in length, furnished with bastions the guns of which could command Coral Bay, was in process of

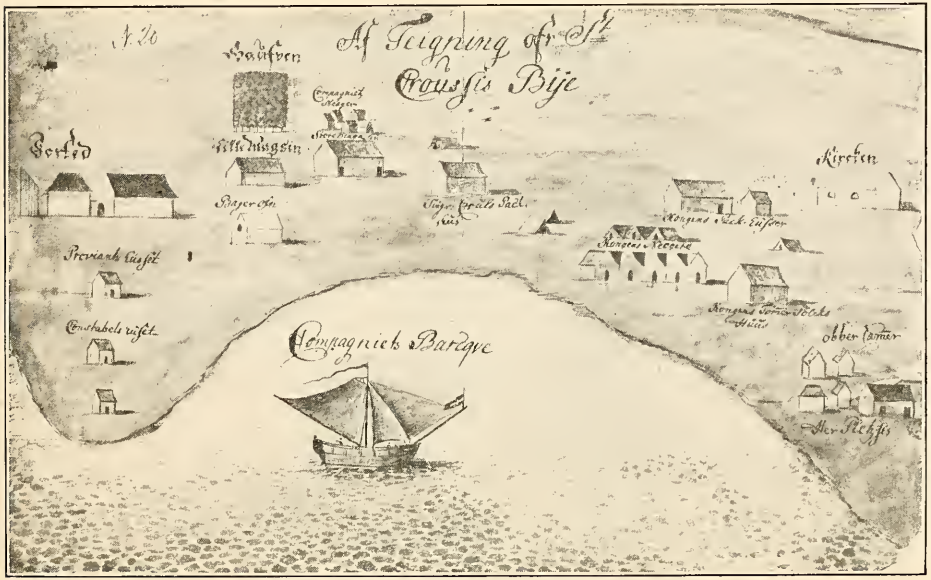
[16] *Udtog af den Ordre og Anstalt . . .* (November 16, 1734.) *Martfeldt MSS.* Vol. III; Gardelin, etc., to Directors, August 8, 1734, *B. & D., 1732–34.*

[17] Gardelin, etc., to Directors (August 8, 1734). *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI.

[18] Moth, etc., to Directors (July 21, 1737). *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI.

[19] *Ibid.* (July 23, 1735).

[20] Thomas "*Haves*" (Howes?), an Englishman from one of the neighboring islands, took charge of the work, being aided by a force of negroes from St. Thomas.



"SKETCH OF ST. CROIX'S TOWN" [Christiansted]
(Watercolor drawing, 1740?, State Archives, Copenhagen)

[*Facing page 216*]

construction. In 1736 it represented an investment, according to the Company's books, of 2,700 *rdl.* It was the St. Thomas fort, however, in which the governor and council took especial pride. The increasingly strained relations between the English and the Spaniards, neither of whom looked with favor on Denmark's purchase of St. Croix, made stronger fortifications at St. Thomas seem imperative. "The fort is now ready, God be praised," was the joyful announcement sent on to the directors in March, 1735, "and in such condition that the English themselves who come here must confess that there is not a fort like it in all the upper islands.[21] It can now be defended by a small force of 30 to 40 men." Christianswærn on St. Croix, located near the Basin on the north side of the island, was not finished until about 1740. It was a fairly pretentious structure, 200 feet square.[22]

The plantations as surveyed were usually three thousand feet long by two thousand feet wide. To prevent a depression in the real estate market, stockholders were forbidden to sell the ground allotted to them at less than 1,000 *rdl.* for a sugar plantation, and half that sum for a cotton plantation.[23] But the terms of sale seemed too high for many of the intending settlers. In March, 1736, the government reported that in conformity with the demands of the intending English settlers, it had reduced the price of sugar plantations from 1,000 to 500–600 *rdl.*, one-sixth to be paid each year, with interest at six per cent. on the unpaid balance. The cost of cotton plantations was similarly reduced, the price being fixed at 20 to 40 *rdl.* for each million square feet, according to the suitability of the soil. Such slaves as were brought in by new planters were to be admitted free of duty. The years of exemption were reduced from seven to three for settlers who cared to take advantage of these terms.[24]

The directors, moved by the plaints of their representatives

[21] *Ober-Eilande* appears to have referred to the Leeward Islands.

[22] Moth, etc., to Directors (September 1, 1737). *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI.

[23] *Udtog af den ordre og Anstalt . . .* (November 16, 1734), paragraphs 12 and 13, *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. III.

[24] *Kop. & Extr., S. P. for St. Th., 1735–52* (March 26, 1736). Of the two hundred and fifteen plantations allotted to shareholders, eighty-seven had been assigned when the above resolutions were made.

in St. Thomas, who bewailed the decreasing ratio of whites, provided for a poll tax of one rixdollar for each full-grown slave, omitting the former tax on the white inhabitants. The attempt to secure a land tax of 40 *rdl.* for each plantation of 6,000,000 square feet was given up, and the authorities contented themselves with 12 *rdl.*[25]

After its relinquishment of the slave-trade, the Company hoped to augment its revenues by means of its plantations, especially those that were being begun on St. Croix. During the nine years from 1726 to 1734, inclusive, the Company's Sugar Plantation on St. Thomas had yielded a measurable profit for only five seasons, so that the average annual gain was just 1,335 *rdl.* During the same period, the New Quarter Plantation went through four profitless seasons, in three of which it incurred an actual loss; yet its average gain was 1,011 *rdl.*[26] This profit was the estimated net result of an investment which was set down in the census for 1735 at a total of 14,121 *rdl.* for the former plantation and 14,530 *rdl.* for the latter.[27] The showing was admittedly meager, in view of the nearly two hundred negroes in the Company's possession on St. Thomas, but these negroes were used for a variety of purposes besides planting. Thirty or forty were usually at work on the reparation of the fort; half a score made up the warehouse force, which was doubled when the ships came in; ten more were required by each of the Company's ships when it lay in the harbor ready for its cargo; there were six carpenters, eight masons, four smiths, a water carrier, a tambour, and a provost; a skilled sugar boiler attended to the juice as it came from the mill; a

[25] *Udtog af den Ordre og Anstalt . . .* (November 16, 1734). *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. III; *Land Liste for St. Croix*, 1742.

[26] *Negotie-Journaler for St. Thomas.*

[27] The 14,121 *rdl.* of the Sugar Plantation's capital was distributed as follows: slaves (25 men, 39 women, 46 children), 7,755 *rdl.;* beasts (2 horses, 4 mules, 2 asses, 11 cattle), 366 *rdl.;* the plantation, with boiling house, warehouse, and manager's dwelling, 6,000 *rdl.* See above, pp. 130–133, for 1690–1704.

The New Quarter plantation, valued at 14,530 *rdl.* included slaves (41 men, 55 women, and 24 children), worth 9,305 *rdl.;* beasts (2 horses, 5 mules, 1 ass, 5 cattle); and plantation with outfit, 4,800 *rdl. Negotie-Journal for St. Thomas*, 1735.

cooper made pipes and hogsheads from Carolina and New England hoops and staves; two trusted slaves ran the Company's bark; a few old domestic negresses who refused to do any plantation work added their numbers to the Company's quota; and a force of twenty or thirty negroes furnished wood both for fuel and for ballast in the Company's ships.[28] It was clear enough that, after deducting for women, children and incapacitated slaves, the Company's plantations were not likely to command the labor required to bring a maximum return.

Despite the fact that the income from the Sugar Plantation fell, during the years from 1735 to 1745, to less than half of what it had been during the preceding decade, the Company hung grimly to it through its entire corporate existence, although in the last six years (1749 to 1754, inclusive) the plantation showed an annual deficit.[29] With the New Quarter plantation the Company was more fortunate, for during the last eleven years—that is, up to the date of its sale in 1746—it yielded an average annual return of 1,136 *rdl.*

It required no especial perspicacity to see that Company ownership and operation of plantations were not likely to fulfill the expectations of the shareholders. Since the slave trade had been left to private initiative on the reorganization of the Company in 1734, it became increasingly clear that the directors would have to look to the control of the Danish-Norwegian market for its profits. The first essential step in the direction of monopoly was taken when the Company in 1737 acquired control of the two competing refineries owned by the Pelt and Weyse families.[30]

But other forms of competition had to be met before appreciable profits could be diverted into the Company's treasury. As early as 1735, the king had trebled the duties on refined sugars, candies, loaf sugar and sirups.[31] At about the same time: namely,

[28] Gardelin, etc., to Directors (August 8, 1734), *B. & D., 1732–34.*

[29] The average net return from the Sugar Plantation during the years 1735–1745, inclusive, was 489.9 *rdl.;* for the entire period of 1735–1754, it was only 189.5 *rdl.*

[30] See above, pp. 206, 207.

[31] The duties were raised from 5 to 15 *sk.* for each pound of sugar, and from 5 to 15 *m.* for each 100 pounds sirup. *Mariager MS.*, p. 169.

on April 25, 1735, the king published a mandate allowing Danish subjects the right freely to trade with the Danish possessions in Guinea and in the West Indies, and the privilege of taking the colonial produce to foreign ports and to all Danish-Norwegian ports except Copenhagen.[32] Although the king's magistrates in Norway and in the Danish provinces had been particularly instructed to encourage trade in the sugar refined by the Company, they found it impossible to prevent the smuggling of foreign refined sugars, especially in Norway, where the fiords invited illicit trade. The Norwegian magistrates advised the abolition of the sugar duties,[33] which were actually reduced to their former level. The Company, which seemed quite able to meet the domestic demand, found its Norwegian consignments of sugar perceptibly rising.[34]

The royal mandate of 1735 had not had the desired effect in stimulating trade; so in a mandate issued on June 18, 1743,[35] private traders were allowed to sell their West Indian cargoes in Copenhagen as well as elsewhere. With those taking up this trade or signifying their intention of doing so, the Company entered into an arrangement on December 3, 1745, with the idea of preventing needless competition. The outsiders were to be allowed to send various East Indian and Chinese wares, and linens, as well as provisions and some "heavy goods"; and these might be sent from Amsterdam and other places besides Copenhagen.[36]

But trade was by no means free, even to Danish subjects, who were to pay the usual five per cent. duty on incoming, and six per cent. on outgoing cargoes. They were allowed to complete a cargo in a foreign island, to be sure, but if they brought it into the harbor of a Danish colony, they would still be required to pay the six per cent. export duty. On goods sold by the Company in the West Indies for the private adventurers, a

[32] *Mariager MS.*, p. 168. The owners of ships taking part in this trade were to pay 2 *rdl.* for each ton (*Laest*), apparently whenever they received the passes and privileges necessary for each voyage.

[33] Their communications were dated April 25, 1740, and June 28, 1741.

[34] *Mariager MS.*, pp. 172 *et seq.*

[35] *Ibid.*, *MS.*, p. 191.

[36] *Ibid.*, *MS.*, pp. 175 *et seq.*

commission of eight per cent. was charged, of which four went to the Company, and four to the West Indian officials.[37] Traders who thus disposed of their cargoes were required to secure their return cargoes from the Company's West Indian warehouse; only if that was impossible were they allowed to supply their wants in the open market.

Slaves brought from the Guinea coast by non-Company skippers were to be sold at auction without delay, and return cargoes to be secured in the mode above-mentioned. The ships of the Company and of private traders were to have preference over those of foreigners in the getting of cargoes.[38]

Not yet satisfied with their terms, some of the merchants, on April 4, 1746, proposed further modifications; they asked among other things for complete exclusion of foreigners from the trade. The aggressiveness of the private adventurers finally prompted the directors to propose a plan of coöperation which would virtually bring the energetic traders into the Company. The king, or at any rate that Board of Trade and Agriculture[39] which acted for him, had lent so sympathetic a hearing to the demands of the merchants that the directors, in a communication dated October 3, 1746, actually suggested that the king follow the example of the monarchs of France and England, and take over the colonies himself. It was curious enough that the first proposal for the discontinuance of the Company should come from its own directorate. The alternative suggestion made by the directors in the same communication was the one actually followed.

The "Plan and Convention of Union," which provided for pooling the interests of shareholders in the Company with those of private traders, was published February 6, 1747. So far as Denmark was concerned, the plan succeeded brilliantly. In the general assembly of the Company, held on March 4, the

[37] *Mariager MS.*, p. 178. The governor and bookkeeper were each to receive one, and the merchant or factor, two per cent.

[38] *Mariager MS.*, pp. 180 *et seq.*

[39] *General-Landets-Økonomi-og-Kommercekollegiet* (1735–1768) continued the commercial functions of the Board of Police and Trade (*Politi-og-Kommercekollegiet*, 1708–1731) and commanded the services of some of the most distinguished men of the state.

directors were able to announce that the number of shares in the Company's "circulating fund," as the new capital stock was called, had been increased from three hundred and sixty-eight to one thousand, and those in the sugar refinery from one hundred and seventeen to two hundred and fifty, —all within the space of a few days. On March 27 an edict was published abrogating all private trade with the colonies and on April 12, 1747, the old and new shareholders of the Company met to set the new scheme in operation. This reorganization had increased the resources of the Company by 316,000 *rdl.*, and those of the refinery by 66,500 *rdl.*, or more than one hundred fifty per cent.[40]

Results so highly pleasing to the stockholders of the corporation were likely to be viewed in a different light by colonists who felt that this was simply another scheme to promote the interests of the Company at their expense. The center of colonial opposition was naturally to be found in the recently acquired and nearly virgin island of St. Croix, where plantation industry had made rapid progress and where in 1741 were to be found about three hundred Englishmen[41] who were none too amenable to Danish law or Company regulations.

A brief survey of the rise of the planting industry on St. Croix will reveal those evidences of economic strength that made the enlargement of the Company's capital appear feasible in 1746–1747. The first census on St. Croix was taken in 1742, on the expiration of the seven year exemption period. In that year two hundred sixty-four plantations were recorded on the books with the names of the owners, and at least two hundred forty of these were surveyed. Although the normal size of a plantation on St. Croix was two thousand feet in width and three thousand feet in length, making 6,000,000 square feet, the average size of St. Croix plantations in 1742 was slightly less than 5,000,000 square feet.[42] Only one hundred twenty of the entire number were listed as "sugar plantations," while one hundred

[40] *Comp. Prot., 1741–54* (April 12, 1747).

[41] H. J. O. Stoud, letter to C. A. von Plessen, January 11, 1741 (*Kirkchist. Saml.*, 4 R. 2 B., p. 56).

[42] The average area was 4,913,100 square feet.

twenty-two were set down as "cotton plantations." Over one thousand nine hundred slaves,[43] large and small, were credited to the island.

What the nature of Danish West Indian society was during these years of struggle between England and Spain for domination in the Caribbean Sea, is disclosed but meagerly in the Company's records. This paucity of information is in part atoned for by two letters: one written in 1738 by Sören Sommer, who appears to have been sent out from Denmark to serve as a manager on one of von Plessen's plantations; the other by a Lutheran minister, H. J. O. Stoud, who came to the islands late in 1740.

Sommer was a man of mediocre attainments, but apparently an honest observer. In a letter[44] written at St. Thomas shortly after his arrival he comments upon the high prices of cattle, poultry, provisions, and especially of linens.[45] The prices on St. Croix are higher than on St. Thomas, he explains, because goods must all come *viâ* St. Thomas. He finds decent people rather scarce, and seems surprised that "white women are not expected to do anything here except drink tea and coffee, eat, make calls, play cards, and at times sew a little." Nearly all the women would consider it quite beneath their dignity to go into the kitchen even to supervise it. The men are as leisurely as the women, but take their comfort in the billiard houses, and, he might have added, in the taverns, in which enormous quantities of intoxicants were consumed, and which the governors found to be constant sources of disorder.

[43] One thousand, five hundred fifty-nine "capable" slaves, thirty-one defectives or "manquerons," and three hundred sixteen children.

[44] Sören Sommer's letter to parents, d. St. Thomas, April 29, 1738. *Ny. Kgl. Saml.* 764.

[45] Among the prices quoted by Sommer are the following: a bull, 60 to 70 *rdl.;* a cow, 30 *rdl.;* a sheep or goat, 4 *rdl.;* a goose, 1 *rdl.;* a turkey gobbler, 1 *rdl.*, 3 *m.;* flour per bbl., 6–8 *rdl.;* salt meat, 9–12; beer, 8–10; Bourdeaux red wine, per hhd., 30 *rdl.;* Provençal wine, 20 *rdl.;* Madeira wine, per pipe, 60–100 *rdl.;* 3 marks was the charge for a very ordinary meal, while 1 *rdl.* was the usual charge per day. Linen selling in Denmark at 3 *m.* could bring 1–2 *sldl.* in St. Thomas. It must be remembered that prices were affected by England's being at war with Spain at this time.

Few if any of the Lutheran ministers who took up the arduous duties of caring for the spiritual needs of this motley and turbulent population left a deeper impression upon the communities which they served than Hans Jacob Ottesen Stoud.[46] During his nine years of service (1740–1749) he managed to buy three cotton plantations,[47] with which he was able to augment a very slender salary.[48] What was equally out of the ordinary for a minister was his election to a place on the privy council (of St. Croix?) where he was particularly concerned with matters appertaining to religion and education.

Stoud's interest in his surroundings began with his arrival. In a letter to Charles Adolph von Plessen early in 1741, he expresses himself with great freedom on local conditions, especially in St. Croix. He divided his time between his congregations on St. Croix and St. Thomas, spending four weeks alternately at each place.[49] He pays his compliments to the population, which, he finds, has little respect for the laws of God or man. Concerning the three hundred or so of Englishmen on St. Croix, he says that "they must rather be looked upon as traitors and rebels than subjects and inhabitants of this country; for they have during my stay caused such tumult by threatening to leave the land in order to fight for their king against the Spaniards,[50] that we should not have dared to remain here without securing help from St. Thomas. They dare, indeed, to threaten the lives of us Danes if they cannot get what they want, for they know that we are but a handful, sixty persons in all, as compared to their great power. . . ."

Like Sommer, he notes the high prices of provisions, and suggests encouraging Norwegian ships to sail to the Danish islands,

[46] For a brief sketch of his life, see H. F. Rördam, "Kirkelige Forholde paa St. Croix 1741" (*Kirkehist. Saml.*, 4 R. 2 B., pp. 67 *et seq.*).

[47] They contained 6, 3, and 2¼ million sq. ft., respectively. In the census for 1743, he is taxed for 13 working slaves, and is credited with three who are under age.

[48] His salary at first was 220 *rdl.* Rördam, "Kirkelige Forholde," p. 61.

[49] During his stay at St. Thomas, he usually gave one Sunday of each month to St. John.

[50] The "War of Jenkins' Ear" began in 1739.

for they could bring lumber as well as provisions.[51] He finds sick people sleeping in the same room with well people, and dying from want of proper food.

"You high lords!" he exclaims in indignation, "I heard much whining and complaining while at home because of the small profit which this land yields, but may God have mercy upon you and save this country and us all from curse and disaster because of the many souls who have so innocently lost their lives in such a fashion." [52]

As a result of Stoud's vigorous representations of local needs, ground for a hospital was actually bought on St. Thomas in 1743. The present hospital on that island, which stands on the site then selected, thus owes its origin to Stoud's energetic measures. In his busy life and despite the lack of text-books, Stoud even found time to instruct a half hundred blacks in the art of reading and in the rudiments of religion. The Moravians had indeed begun their self-sacrificing labors nearly a decade before, but this appears to have been the first instance where a Danish Lutheran minister has done missionary work among the negroes on a measurable scale. Systematic missionary work with the blacks was not begun until the close of the Company's career.

While Stoud was no doubt largely right in looking on St. Croix in these early years as "very poor," especially from the viewpoint of the men who had to work on a meager wage, people with capital could, if they were enterprising and if fortune smiled on them, rise very rapidly. During the interval from 1742 to 1745 the number of plantations on St. Croix remained practically stationary, for little idle land was left, but the number of slaves increased from nineteen hundred and six to twenty-eight hundred and seventy-eight, a gain of fifty-one per cent. in three years. The outbreak of war between

[51] "In these times candles cost 2 marks the pound; butter, 24 *sk.;* 1 hen, 24 *sk.*, at least; 1 pot of beer, 24 *sk.*, 1 pot of wine, 2 to 3 *m.;* 1 bbl. salt meat, 10 *rdl.* and poor at that; 1 lamb, 2 to 3 *rdl.;* an egg, 2 *sk.;* a cow, 40 to 50 *rdl.;* a horse 100 to 150 *rdl.* I am not mentioning furniture and clothes and other things equally necessary which are all fearfully expensive, in fact are not procurable most of the time."

[52] *Kirkehist. Saml.*, 4 R. 2 B., p. 58.

France and England had led Governor Schweder and his council to remit the duties on slaves imported into St. Croix, and thus encourage planters to move thither from the disturbed area.[53] For St. Thomas, on the other hand, the entire period from about 1725 up to the Company's reorganization in 1747 was one of decline, if the slave population be a reliable index.

Among the early settlers of St. Croix was a Dutchman from St. Eustatius by the name of Peter Heiliger.[54] The possessions of this man and those of others of the same name, as recorded in the census lists, may be taken fairly to represent the condition of the prosperous planter during the last decade and a half of the Company's life. In 1742 four members of the Heiliger tribe held five cotton and four sugar plantations totalling fifty million square feet in area, and commanding the labors of ninety-five slaves. Three years later the family plantations had increased by nearly sixteen million square feet, and the family store of slaves by forty-four.[55] Peter Heiliger had boasted to the governor that he did not expect to retire from planting until he and his brothers had amassed four hundred slaves.[56] Although this increase suggests a fairly healthy state of affairs among an arbitrarily selected group of planters, it was scarcely as large as the rate of increase for the entire island.

The prices of sugar and cotton were naturally facts of the most vital concern to the life of the West Indian planter, to whom it must often have appeared that the chief business of the Company was to see how far below the current West Indian price it could force the planter to sell his goods. During the depression following the Peace of Utrecht the price of sugar at St. Thomas had gradually declined from 5 *rdl.* per hundred pounds until finally it reached its lowest point in 1739, when it brought but

[53] *Secret-Raadets Breve . . . 1739–47* (*Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI).

[54] Or *Heyliger*. He had been governor of St. Eustatius, and had apparently moved to St. Thomas with his slaves on the outbreak of the war between France and England. See letter of Governor and Council to Directors, January 31, 1744 (*Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI).

[55] *Land Lister for St. Croix*. These census lists are the sources for the statistical information in this chapter except where otherwise specified.

[56] *Martfeldt MSS.*, vol. VI, pp. 123 *et seq.*

3 to 3½ *rdl.* The cotton market was slightly better, for whereas cotton brought 13 to 14 *sk.* per pound in 1716, it commanded a price of 14 to 14½ *sk.* in 1739.[57] In 1741, not long after John Heiliger and his brother had come over from St. Eustatius, the price of sugar had risen to 4–4½ *rdl.* per hundred pounds. To what extent, if any, this increase was due to the outbreak of a war in Europe which involved both England and France, it is difficult to say.

The increased prices secured by planters for their sugar were no doubt a chief cause in bringing about the increase in the slave population already noted.

Other influences were at work which tended to draw the attention of Danish statesmen to the necessity of providing a new set of navigation laws for West Indian trade, or, indeed, of entirely reorganizing the Company. By waging war against Spain over the matter of "Jenkins' Ear," England had lost her chance of carrying on legally that trade with Spain which had been secured to the South Sea Company by the Asiento of 1713. With the opening of the War of the Austrian Succession, when it appeared inevitable that England would be drawn into the war against France, Danish statesmen began to incline toward the latter state. By a treaty made in 1739, England had secured from Denmark the promise of six thousand Danish troops to be provided under certain contingencies, but when it appeared that these troops were desired rather to help England hold Hanover than to assist Maria Theresa of Austria in her struggle with Frederick II of Prussia, the Danish ministers,[58] who were anxious to keep out of the complications, decided to cultivate the friendship of his most Christian Majesty. On March 15, 1742, the very day following the expiration of the treaty with England, a treaty of friendship was concluded with France.[59]

These events in Europe had their significance for the Danish

[57] *Udtog af Sekrete-Raads Protokoller, 1710–20; Udtog af . . . Breve til Directionen, 1739–47. Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI. See also *Appendix K.*

[58] Berckentin and Schulin.

[59] E. Holm, *Den dansk-norske Stats Stilling under Krigene i Europa 1740–42 (Kjöbenhavn, 1891)*, p. 55. This treaty marks the beginning of a policy of friendship with France which continued for twenty-three years, and was supported first by Schulin and later by J. H. E. Bernstorff. *Ibid.*, p. 60.

West India and Guinea Company and its islands. The mandate of June 18, 1743, gave to private traders an opportunity to carry on with the Spanish islands an illicit trade which would be quite beneath the Company's dignity to enjoy. On July 25, 1742, there went out from San Ildefonso a royal order signed by the Spanish king's minister, Campillo, requesting that the Porto Rico government should cease disturbing the Danes in their possession of St. Croix and St. Thomas, and should permit them to buy—for cash—such Porto Rico wares as they might desire.[60] But the matter of the restitution of the slaves escaped to Porto Rico from St. Thomas was not clearly provided for and it remained the chief stumbling block in the relations between the Danes and the Spaniards.[61] A similar order was issued on May 12, 1745, with equally meager results. When in 1746 a canoe containing eight slaves belonging to Governor Colomo's [62] secretary, Manuel de Pando, landed on the west end of St. Thomas, the Danish authorities acted with alacrity to prevent the slaves from returning. Could the tide of fugitive slaves have been induced to turn towards St. Thomas rather than from it, Spain might have made a more serious effort to effect a settlement through diplomacy.[63] But the Spanish authorities probably knew that the Danes gained more from forbidden trade than they lost from escaped negroes.

In concluding the treaty with Louis XV in 1742, Christian VI had had his eye on conditions in northern Europe rather than on those in the distant tropics. Governor Schweder and his council, in one of their first letters to the directors[64] after the

[60] *Vest. Dir. K. B., 1733–54.* This communication, which is of course only a copy, and is uncertified, was addressed to Matthias Abadia, then governor of Porto Rico.

[61] *Mariager MS.*, p. 198.

[62] Juan Joseph Colomo succeeded Abadia as governor about 1745.

[63] The accumulated claims of the Company against "the Spanish Nation in America" were estimated in 1745 at 335,911 *rdl.* This included 104,443 *rdl.* for two ships lost in Honduras Bay in 1710; 81,467 *rdl.* for negroes stolen in 1702; 150,000 *rdl.* for three hundred negroes escaped from St. Thomas and St. Croix, not to mention inhabitants' ships that had been seized and confiscated. *Vest. Dir. K. B., 1733–54* (May 11, 1745).

[64] *Udtog af . . . Breve til Directionen, 1739–47* (July 3, 1744). *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI.

resignation of Governor Frederick Moth, called attention to the absence of any Danish-English treaties among the documents recently received from home, for "these are the ones of which we can make the best use, inasmuch as it is the English alone who have molested us of late. . . ." Later in the same year (1744) an English privateer, one "Dromgool," entered St. Thomas harbor one night and seized and made off with a French sloop or small bark.[65] A Spaniard [66] who had secured Danish passports and had become a naturalized Danish citizen, was seized by an English privateer and brought to Antigua, although the Danish authorities at St. Thomas insisted that he was carrying non-contraband goods. The Antigua admiralty court actually made plans for sending a commission to St. Thomas in order to investigate the Spaniard's status. Against such an infringement of its sovereignty the St. Thomas government naturally protested.[67]

These examples will serve to illustrate the unstable conditions again obtaining in the West Indies as the result of a European war. If the Company wished to be in a position to share some of those advantages which enterprising skippers had shown themselves able to secure, it clearly needed to augment and revitalize its resources.[68]

Von Plessen, who had assumed the presidency of the Company in 1735, remained in its service until 1749, and in March, 1750, his place was taken by Adam Gottlob Moltke. During these years von Plessen had upheld the interests of the Company against many kinds of opposition, from that of the enterprising ship-owner Björn to that advanced by as experienced a skipper as J. N. Holst, who in a communication to the king not only delivered a scathing arraignment of the Company's administration but volunteered his opinions on matters of justice and religion as well as commerce and colonial administration.[69]

[65] *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI, September 25, 1744.

[66] "Don Francisco Hinestroca Martinez." See *ibid.* (April 28, 1745).

[67] *Udtog af . . . Breve til Directionen, 1739–47* (April 28, 1745).

[68] One of the constant difficulties was with soldiers and marines, who were likely either to fall victims to the fever or to desert to a foreign ship for the sake of the higher wages offered. See *ibid.* (July 3, 1744). *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI.

[69] "It is a well-known fact that all monopolies are injurious to a country in

Administrative difficulties in the islands added to the cares of the directors. Christian Schweder, a lieutenant of artillery in Copenhagen, was selected in 1743 to take the place of Moth, whose stewardship was not giving satisfaction.[70] Besides these disorders within, the Company had suffered serious losses in ships. During twelve years (1735–1746, inclusive) five of its ships, two of them with full West Indian cargoes and their entire crews, were completely lost.[71]

With the adoption of the plan of union between the Company and its active commercial rivals, the opposition in Denmark was for the time being silenced. The position of distinguished leaders like von Plessen was strengthened by the fact that several of them had become actively engaged in the planting business on St. Croix; they had retained and developed plantations secured as a bonus with each share of a specified size. So the situation was not so very different from that in the English sugar colonies where it was said in 1760 that "Many Gentlemen of the *West Indies* have seats in the *British* House of Commons."[72] The Danish West India planters did not lack advocates in Danish government circles,[73] although they were certainly not "represented" there in any modern sense.

The royal edict clinching the reorganized Company's monopoly of the trade with the West Indies was issued in March, 1747, and the news reached the West Indies during the summer. When the inhabitants learned that the king had forbidden that

the highest degree, likewise all monopolistic companies except the Asiatic companies. . . ." On what basis Holst arrived at this interesting conclusion is not clear; apparently he was expressing a generally accepted current opinion. *Thottske Saml.*, No. 515 (September 11, 1746). Roy. Libr. For Björn, see E. Holm, *Danmark og Norges Historie*, III B., p. 236.

[70] *Comp. Prot., 1741–54* (April 8, 1744). Schweder's health broke down before he had been in office many months, and he was succeeded by Christian Suhm.

[71] *Mariager MS.*, pp. 205 *et seq.* For earlier losses, see above, p. 152.

[72] *Remarks on the Letter Address'd to Two Great Men* (London, 1760), quoted in Beer, *British Colonial Policy, 1754–65*, p. 136.

[73] Among the Danish owners of St. Croix plantations in 1745 were the king (four cultivated plantations), C. A. von Plessen (six plantations), and "Commandeur" Captain Lövenörn (six). The other original grantees had apparently sold their West Indian holdings.

trade by private ship-owners which had been permitted by the edict of April 25, 1735 and subsequent mandates, they became well-nigh desperate. A third of a century had passed since the last delegation had been sent by Danish West Indian planters to present their case before the high and mighty lords of trade in Copenhagen. The projected restriction of their freedom to trade and to dispose of their produce seemed to strike at the very roots of their hard-earned prosperity.

Schweder's successor, Governor Christian Suhm, and his council were alarmed at the opposition raised by the king's edict, and expressed their fears for the ruin of the islands and the Company's trade.[74] All sorts of threats of reprisals against the Company were in the air,—flight, boycott, hoarding of the sugar on hand and in prospect, to prevent the Company's ships from securing cargoes,—"for they insist absolutely on being masters over their own property," wrote Suhm, "and on enjoying the same sort of liberties as the French and English subjects have. . . ." The report that the Danish planters were known in neighboring islands as "the Company's negroes" would, they feared, frighten off planters who might desire to move to the Danish islands.[75]

The thing most feared by the planters as a result of the new navigation laws was that the ships from New York and New England would cease entirely to come to the Danish islands. Not only did the vessels from New York, Providence and Boston bring provisions (flour, dried codfish, etc.), but such plantation requisites as hoops, barrel staves and bottoms, planks, shingles,

[74] Suhm and council to Directors (February 3, 1748). *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI, pp. 76 *et seq.*

[75] To the Company's complaint that the price of cotton and sugar had been set at too high a figure, Governor Suhm replied that formerly, when sugar brought only 4½ *rdl.* per 100 lbs. and brought a net revenue of only 2½ *rdl.* per 100 lbs. in Holland, the planters were able to secure a good slave for 100–150 *rdl.*, while now they must pay 200–300 *rdl.* at auction. During the same period, the cost of mules had risen from 30–50 to 80–100 *rdl.* or more; a good horse from 30–50 to 200–300 *rdl.*; staves, from 12–16 to 35–50 *rdl.* per 1,000; English hhd. hoops, from 14–18 to 40–60 *rdl.* per 1,000; planks, from 16–20 to 35–40 per 1,000 feet; shingles, from 3 *rdl.* to 6–7 *rdl.* and from 18–20 to 30 *rdl.*, according to size. All of these "are things belonging to a plantation." *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. VI, pp. 76 *et seq.*

and horses,[76] for many of the mills which crushed out the cane-juice were run by horse or mule power. These North American skippers naturally insisted on being allowed to secure sugar and molasses cargoes in return for their lumber and provisions, and were prepared to pay good prices for them. The prospect of having so important a competitor legislated out of the West Indian field alarmed the planters deeply.

The chief instrument by which the planters made known their grievances was the burgher council[77] which usually consisted of four to seven members who met with the governor and privy council to consider matters of general interest. They kept a copy of the records of these joint meetings, and not infrequently did they meet by themselves to consider ways and means.

The directors, who had scarcely realized what a disturbance their distant colonists could raise, made haste to stem the tide of disaffection. The planters promptly sent two of the leading members of the burgher council to Copenhagen. One of them was a planter of unusual shrewdness named John William Schopen.[78] The directors responded to the planters' grievances with reasonable promptness. They made some concessions on July 24, 1748, but these proved inadequate, so on August 27, 1749, they met once more in their general assembly to consider some mode of solution. They insisted on the Company's prior right to buy the products of the islands at such price as the local market and that of the French and English islands justified. This price was to be fixed at least once a year, or as often as the Company's ships came for cargoes, by "the Government" and the burgher council, meeting jointly.[79] Although the burgher

[76] *Kop. & Extr., S. P. for St. Th., 1735–52* (November 12, 1748).

[77] See above, p. 185. In 1748 the following planters held seats in the burgher council: P. J. Pannet, A. Lerke, Jean Malleville, H. Specht, Pieter de Windt, Johannes von Bewerhoudt Glaudison, and Johannes de Windt. *Cf. Kop. & Extr., S. P. for St. Th., 1735–52* (November 12, 1748). The records of their proceedings, being non-official, are not to be found among the Company's archives in Copenhagen, at any rate not at the State Archives.

[78] *Mariager MS.*, p. 196; Höst, *Efterretninger om Öen Sanct Thomas*, p. 139.

[79] *Comp. Prot., 1741–54*, "*General-Forsamling*" of August 27, 1749. *Cf. Mariager MS.*, p. 196.

council was usually the larger body, and the majority vote was to decide the market price, a sufficient number of the burgher council members usually withdrew in order to make the number in each council even when they convened to fix the prices.

As a further concession the Company permitted the purchase of "provisions and other things necessary for plantation cultivation from New York and other places in New England" for plantation products, but specified that all other trade with foreign lands must be carried on through Copenhagen alone. To this the privy and burgher councils meeting in joint session objected that the desired quality of certain necessaries, such as Irish beef, butter, candles, sugar kettles for the plantations, sugar-mill repairs, hoes, sugar-hatchets, and axes, could be secured at a reasonable price in England alone.

Since 1743, a number of planters had taken advantage of the trading privileges then granted by the crown. But their shipping had been so seriously hampered by the Convention Plan of 1747, that the Company attempted in 1749 to conciliate these disaffected interests. The Danish colonists were to be allowed to import such products as cacao, coffee, tobacco, indigo and other dyes, hides and skins, Campeachy and similar valuable woods, free of duty, and on exporting them were to pay but half of the usual "outgoing recognition,"—namely, three per cent. on St. Thomas, and two and one-half per cent. on St. Croix.[80] But they must export such goods in their own ships and take them to Copenhagen, whence they might be exported to foreign ports.

These restrictions did not please the planters, who wished to be able to ship their purchases from outside—to say nothing of their own produce—in any craft lying in the harbor with which agreement as to freight rates could be made; they hoped especially to establish trade with "the Spanish places" in America. The Company's attempt to limit the privileges to those colonists who had resided on the islands for three years, also met with a vigorous protest from the burgher council, which insisted that such a measure would deter intending settlers from coming,

[80] Goods actually consumed on the islands were to be subject to an import duty of five per cent.

and drive off a number who were already there. They likewise insisted that they should not be limited in their purchase of ships to those made in Danish-Norwegian lands; there were too numerous opportunities in the West Indies for bargains in ships of many sorts for such a rule to appear just.[81]

The arrangement whereby the burgher council was permitted to share with the privy council in the fixing of prices on plantation produce certainly did not make any less apparent the evidences of friction between those governing and those governed. It proved rather an entering wedge which brought in its train so much of trouble for the Company as to be one of the chief causes for its dissolution. In the burgher council the planters had a legally sanctioned instrument which became more effective by use and by which they were able to bring to the Company's attention all manner of alleged abuses and grievances.

During the years following the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748) the prices for sugar in Europe tended to decline. The demand in New York and New England, on the other hand, remained so persistent that with a fairly free market the prices in the West Indies continued at about the same level as at the close of the war. The dependence of the Danish colonies upon the New York traders in lumber and provisions made the West Indian government's position peculiarly trying. Nor had those West Indian planters who had shown so active an interest in buying ships and developing a trade of their own, made any appreciable effort at exploiting the Guinea slave trade.

In the hope of making up for the low European prices and ostensibly of inducing a revival of the slave trade under the Danish flag, the Danish West Indian government attempted to enforce two new ordinances: the first raising the import tax on slaves imported to the islands in foreign vessels, or bought by the inhabitants in other islands; the second increasing the export tax on sugars sold to New York skippers in exchange

[81] The views of the two colonial councils on the resolutions of 1749 are to be found in *Kop. & Extr., S. P. for St. Th., 1735–52* (February 17, 1750). The directors were willing to permit the inhabitants to purchase American vessels only during war time. *Comp. Prot., 1741–54* (February 24, 1751).

for their lumber and provisions.[82] The planters saw clearly that the foreign merchants would shift the burden by the simple expedient of raising the prices on their wares. The directors heeded the protest of the burgher council and promptly disavowed the actions of their West Indian representatives.[83]

The trouble that the Company had experienced with smuggling during the recent war did not cease with its close. With the establishment of the town of Fredericksted on the west end of St. Croix came the necessity of providing proper means for the collection of customs duties. It was soon found that a customs house was not sufficient, but that cannon must be provided, and so placed as to command the roads where the ships lay anchored. In lack of such a "water battery," ships were accustomed to slip away in the night-time without securing papers or paying their dues.[84] The bribing of Danish officials seems not to have been an impossible feat.[85]

The increasing ability of the planters to make the Company hear and heed their grievances must not be taken as a sign of economic distress for either party. By 1754 the number of negroes recorded in the census lists had grown to seven thousand five hundred and sixty-six, an increase of one hundred and sixty-two per cent. over the figures for 1745. In the town of Christiansted were eighty-three white inhabitants, each of whom owned from a single slave to sixty-six of them. Of individual holdings those of the Heiliger family may be taken as a fair index. From one hundred and thirty-nine slaves in 1745, they increased to five hundred and seventy-eight in 1751, fell to four hundred and thirty in the year following, and

[82] *Extr. Udskr. af S. P. for St. C., 1744–52* (January 12, 1751). The tax on exported sugar was raised from five to seven and one-half per cent., that on slaves at 4 *rdl.* for each one imported, and a "premium" of four per cent. on such slaves as were sold at public auction.

[83] The local government had tried to permit the Company's debtors to sell at a higher price than the other planters, but this position they were unable to maintain.

[84] *General-Forsamlingen* (February 24, 1751). *Comp. Prot., 1741–54.*

[85] There was considerable stir over customs frauds in 1743–1744. The table of customs dues (*Appendixes M* and *N*) gives an idea of the vicissitudes of this branch of the Company's income.

reached the respectable total of six hundred and seventy in 1753.[86] Considered as a whole, these figures do not betoken anything more serious than a fairly rapid growth.

The ability of the planters to incur debts increased so rapidly during this period that one is forced to conclude that something approaching a boom must have been on. In 1747 the Company was credited on its books with 136,000 *rdl.* owed to it by the planters. By 1753, the debts of the planters to the Company had risen to the considerable sum of 562,000 *rdl.*, an increase of more than four hundred per cent. in six years. This state of affairs is only partly accounted for by the increase in the planter population, whose numbers rose from two hundred and seven in 1747 to three hundred and fifty-four in 1753, or at the rate of seventy-one per cent.

The rapid growth of St. Croix finally brought about the separation of its government from that of St. Thomas and St. John.[87] In 1751 the latter islands received a small measure of tardy justice when their poll and land taxes were lowered to the same level as those of St. Croix.[88]

To trace the Company's business through the mazes of "Italian" bookkeeping in records that are scattered through scores of books and over thousands of pages, and to achieve thereby dependable results, are things which the investigators may desire—and even feel he deserves—but scarcely a goal which he may attain. It is, however, worth noting that the "Princess," a St. Croix plantation owned by the Company, was recorded as being three times as valuable in 1753 as it was when the census of 1745 was taken. While the Company's income from poll

[86] In 1754, the last year of the Company, the Heiligers were credited with six hundred and forty slaves, a falling off of thirty.

[87] Höst, p. 136. Jens Hansen, who was in immediate charge at St. Croix, refused to submit to the orders of Governor Christian Suhm, even when the latter was at St. Croix. The dispute was appealed to the directors with the splitting of jurisdiction as a result. Hansen remained as governor of St. Croix until relieved by Peter Clausen in 1751.

[88] *Proponenda* . . . (September 14, 1751), *Comp. Prot., 1741–54.* The taxes, which had amounted to 2½ *rdl.* for each working slave, 8 *rdl.* for each slave imported, six per cent. on imports and exports, and 2 *rdl.* 8 *sk.* for each million square feet, were reduced to 1 *rdl.*, 4 *rdl.*, five per cent, and 2 *rdl.*, respectively.

and land taxes naturally kept even pace with the increase in the planting population,[89] its receipts from customs duties remained at less than twenty-six dollars for each planter up to 1747, when the receipts suddenly doubled. From that year to the end of the Company's existence, they remained at about forty-six dollars per capita.[90]

The unprecedented enforcement of customs regulations which made possible so favorable a showing over so long a period was without doubt largely due to the zeal with which Peter Clausen, who assumed the duties of assistant factor and treasurer in 1748, performed the functions of his office.[91] After a little more than three years Clausen succeeded Jens Hansen as governor of St. Croix,[92] and he continued to fill this office with pomp and distinction long after the dissolution of the Company.

Another evidence of the extent to which the Company attempted to revive and enlarge its business under the Plan of 1747 is to be found in the number of ships sent out by the Company. Whereas previously to 1747 it rarely had more than three or four ships on the run to Guinea and the West Indies, in 1750-1751 it already had not fewer than thirteen ships in its possession, seven of them intended for the West Indian trade, and four for Guinea.[93]

In order to protect the privileged refineries in Copenhagen, of which those of the Company were the chief, an edict was issued by the king on March 31, 1750, absolutely forbidding the importation of refined sugars and sirups into Danish domin-

[89] In 1742, eighty-four planters paid 2,807 *rdl.* in taxes, and the Company took in 1,267 *rdl.* in duties; ten years later, there were three hundred and thirty-two planters, 8,801 *rdl.* taxes, and 13,358 *rdl.* of customs duties.

[90] The figures for 1751 appear to have been omitted from the books.

[91] *Ekstr. & Udskr. af S. P. for St. Cr., 1744–52* (October 17, 1748).

[92] *Ibid.* (December 22, 1751).

[93] Among these ships with their captains were the brigantine *Postillion* (Captain Hans Rieman Thoersen): the frigates *Vesuvius* (Jacob Grönberg); *Princess Wilhelmina Carolina* (Nicolaj Höyer); *Jægersborg* (Ole Erichsen); *Neptune* (Captain ——?); *Prince Christian* (Captain Pheiff); *The Crown Prince's Desire* (Ole Reinholt); *Christiansted* (Captain Tofte); *The Three Princesses* (Rönne); *Princess Sophia Magdalene* (Jens Knie); *Sorgenfrey* (Peder Krogh Collin); *Christian Frederick* (Joh. Fred. Knutzen). *Comp. Prot., 1741–54* (April 22, 1750; February 24, 1751).

ions, and requiring the recognized refineries to have on hand a sufficient supply ready for disposal at a reasonable price.[94] This measure, taken in the very month in which Adam Gottlob von Moltke assumed the presidency of the Company, was no doubt put forward by that statesman.[95]

But the problem of distribution was difficult, especially in Norway, where the many fiords made it almost impossible to prevent smuggling. By contract with the Company, refineries were permitted in Bergen, Aggershus, Christiansand and Trondhiem in Norway, and in Odense, Randers, Aalborg and Viborg in Denmark, all for periods of thirty years.[96] It appears that within each diocese or district a certain refinery had special privileges, although the Copenhagen refineries retained the right to enter into competition with them.[97]

But the end of the Company's monopoly was clearly approaching. The idea of the king's taking over the shares held by his subjects had indeed been broached in a general assembly of shareholders held in 1746.[98] The Plan of 1747 had merely delayed the inevitable. In 1750, when the Company had eight ships on its various routes, the directors proposed to the stockholders that the Company avail itself of freight ships, rather than attempt, for the time, to buy other vessels. An oversupply of unsold raw sugar was given as the reason for this proposal. Although they later added several new vessels to the Company's fleet, the loss of three ships in the years 1751–1752 must have had a depressing effect.[99]

[94] *Mariager MS.*, pp. 199 *et seq.*

[95] This is the view held by the Danish historian, Edvard Holm (*Danmark og Norges Historie 1720–1814*, III B., p. 236).

[96] *Mariager MS.*, pp. 202 *et seq.* The incorporators whose names were given for the various cities were as follows,—Bergen: burgomaster Garboe; Aggershus and Christiansand: Carsten Tank; Trondhiem: councilor of state Hans Ulrich Möllman; Odense: Johan Christopher von Westen; Randers: Sören Simonsen; and Aalborg and Viborg: Henrich Ladiges. Within a few years after the dissolution of the Company, not fewer than eighteen licenses were granted permitting the establishment of refineries in Copenhagen. It was evidently a profitable business. *Cf.* E. Holm, *Danmark og Norges Historie, 1720–1814*, III B., p. 164.

[97] E. Holm, *ibid.*, p. 164.

[98] *Comp. Prot., 1741–54.*

[99] The ship *Christian Frederick* (Captain Johan Friderich Knudsen) was burned

These losses were followed in 1753 by the news of the misfortune suffered by the *Patientia*, one of the Guinea ships. While sailing along the Guinea coast between El Mina and Cape Coast Castle with a cargo of two hundred and seventy-five slaves, three of the negroes started a mutiny and drove off the crew, after wounding the captain and killing three of the men. The captain and crew were taken aboard an English slaver, the *Triton*, at Annaboe. With the assistance of the English, they managed after some trouble and great expense to get back their ship and some remnants of their cargo. Captain Erichsen finally arrived at St. Thomas on February 28, 1754,[100] with one hundred and forty-six slaves.[101]

Before the news of the above disaster had reached Copenhagen, the St. Croix burgher council, through its capable representative, John William Schopen, presented to Frederick V an urgent petition that the West Indian colonists on St. Croix be permitted to come under the immediate sovereignty of the king. Such an act would be considered by them as an "inestimable act of grace and benefaction," from which they would expect great and permanent results.[102]

These various hindrances to the continued prosperity of the Company were all set forth by the directors and chief shareholders in their *Proponenda* of July 24, 1754. This docu-

on the Norway coast on September 14, 1751, while homeward bound with a full cargo. The frigate *Sorgenfrey* (Captain Peder Krog Collin), which had come from Guinea and had been sent out from St. Thomas on September 2, 1751, was never heard of again. The frigate *Princess Wilhelmine Caroline* (Captain Nicolai Höyer) while homeward bound from Guinea and St. Thomas was lost on the west coast of Jutland, November 5, 1752. *Mariager MS.*, p. 206.

[100] He had taken on his cargo on September 30, 1753.

[101] *B. & D. indk. fra Guinea* (September 15, 1753); *B. & D., St. Th.* (February 28, 1754); *Proponenda* of July 24, 1754, *Comp. Prot., 1741–54*. The cargo, when it arrived at St. Thomas, included sixty-seven men, thirty women, thirty-eight boys and eleven girls. Among the other losses were 1,005 *rdl.* worth of gold, fourteen ivory tusks, and thirty-seven "*Creveler.*" The total loss was estimated at about 20,000 *rdl.*

[102] *Proponenda* of July 24, 1754, *Comp. Prot., 1741–54*. This and Professor Holm's admirable account (*Danmark og Norges Historie, 1720–1814*, III B., pp. 164 *et seq.*) form the basis of the following account of the dissolution of the Company.

ment was intended to lay the state of the Company's affairs and their recommendation of ways and means to bring about its dissolution before the stockholders of the Company.

Schopen's petition to the king had been referred to that Board of Trade [103] which a few years earlier had pronounced against the absorption of the Company by the king. But the personnel of the Board, as well as the character of the times, had changed. Early in 1752, J. H. E. Bernstorff had become a member, and he is credited by the historian Höst, who was a contemporary of Bernstorff, with being the chief ministerial champion of the St. Croix colonists.[104] At any rate, the Board of Trade reported on May 9, 1754, in favor of the plan and suggested how it might be carried out.

The debts due the Company in Guinea and the West Indies were estimated at 1,000,000 *rdl.*; its liabilities (not including the refinery) at 800,000 *rdl.* But the assets were likely to shrink to something like 600,000 *rdl.* before they actually could reach Denmark, for prices were high in the West Indies and low in Denmark. Under these circumstances, the directors and chief shareholders recommended, and the Company, in meeting assembled, accepted the offer of the king.

So Frederick V took over at their par value the one thousand two hundred and fifty shares of the Danish West India and Guinea Company, which included its refinery stock, and pledged himself to assume its obligations. To cover the expenses of the purchase, the state issued notes to the extent of 2,239,446 *rdl.*, of which 1,250,000 *rdl.* were set aside for the payment of the Company's shareholders.

The Danish government had no intention of going into business in the Company's stead, but to the great joy of its West Indian colonists it threw open all of the trade formerly enjoyed by the Company to all its subjects, whether they lived in Denmark, Norway, the duchies, or in the West Indies. This in-

[103] The *General-Landets-Ökonomi- og Kommercekollegiet* was organized in 1735 and continued until 1768, when it was combined with the "*Vestindisk-Guineiske Rente- samt Generaltoldkammer*" to form the "*Generaltoldkammer- og Kommercekollegium.*"

[104] Höst, *Efterretninger*, p. 139.

cluded the right to take slaves from the Guinea coast and to ship Danish-Norwegian as well as East India Company wares freely to the West Indies. Goods produced in royal lands were not to be imported from other places, and goods loaded on Danish subjects' ships in the West Indies were to go to Denmark alone. This was all in strict accord with the prevailing mercantilist theory, which insisted on the one hand, that the colonies must supply raw material to be manufactured or prepared for consumption in the mother country, and on the other the more recent idea, suggested by the growth of the colonies in wealth and population, that they must furnish a market for the surplus produce and manufactures of the home lands. How the new colonial policy of the Danish state was to work out upon the basis of this new commercial freedom cannot be related here. The story of how that policy adjusted itself to the rapidly changing conditions that resulted from those gigantic wars in which France lost her New World empire and England her mainland colonies, has not yet been completely told.

The West India, like the East India Company had served not only as a field of commercial investment, but as a training ground for those statesmen upon whom an absolute monarch had to depend in the government of his dominions. The council board of the Company gave frequent opportunity for the display of those talents which were likely to prove of use in other and perhaps wider fields of endeavor. The Company had added two fertile islands to its original New World territory, and had managed to retain continuous control of them through numerous European wars in which the possession of additional West Indian colonies was more than once an important consideration for the larger, trade-hungry nations. With its gaze fixed upon material rather than human interests, the Company had too often pursued a selfish policy, but it had piloted its turbulent and heterogeneously composed colonies through a period of eighty-four years, and handed over to the king a domain the vigor of whose population had been attested time and again by their ability to protest effectively against alleged violations of their rights.

SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTER: 1755–1917

When King Frederick V assumed direct control of the islands in 1754, Europe was on the verge of a general war. This conflict, in which Prussia and Austria were the principals on land, and England and the Bourbon powers of France and Spain were the chief contestants on sea, developed into a world-wide contest for colonial and naval supremacy. The control of India, Canada, and the West Indies became the avowed object of the contending nations. During the struggle,—the Seven Years' War,—Denmark-Norway managed to maintain its neutrality and undisturbed possession of its islands in the West Indies. The enforcement of the Rule of 1756, proclaimed by Great Britain in the beginning of the war, worked severe hardships on Danish-Norwegian commerce, for France had thrown her colonial ports open to neutral shipping, a course that gave the neutrals an advantage in time of war that they had not enjoyed in time of peace. The Danish foreign minister J. H. E. Bernstorff became particularly bitter in his denunciation of England's course when English privateers began seizing Danish and Norwegian ships and cargoes from the West Indies on the pretext that they contained French owned goods.

The English, Bernstorff felt, were permitting undue liberties to privateers under cloak of fighting for the "freedom of Europe." By 1759, an agreement was reached by which a skipper was allowed to proceed on giving surety for that part of the cargo which was charged with being French and paying the costs incurred in the case. This vindication of neutral rights was secured in part through the efforts of an expert on international law, Dr. Martin Hübner, sent to London by Bernstorff to represent Danish interests. As a further safeguard the government provided a convoy for vessels returning to Copenhagen from the West Indies.

Among the most persistent matters demanding attention on the islands, was the collection of the huge debt owed by the

planters, a debt which the king had taken over from the Company. This task was so zealously performed by the St. Croix factor, Peter Clausen, that the latter was made governor-general in 1766 on the strength of it. The influential English element of the planter population of St. Croix particularly resented the methods employed by Clausen and the government to hasten the liquidation of these debts. Unable to secure an outlet for their grievances in the St. Croix weekly newspaper which had begun to appear in 1770, they found that the local English colonial newspapers had no hesitancy in giving them space to voice their plaints. In a copy of the *Caribbean and General Gazette*, of February 5, 1774, published on one of the English islands, this appears: [1]

"The following little piece, whose greatest merit is that it flows from the Heart, Spurning at dispotic Insolence of Power, was sent by a Correspondent in St. Croix to a Gentleman here. We publish it as a Tribute due to Natural liberty, and to shew our own Countrymen the Happiness they enjoy under the mild Dispensations of the British Laws.

When Heaven, indulgent, bless'd this land
With peace and plenty crown'd
Like heavenly dew von Pröck's [2] hand
Dispensed his kindness round

But base ingratitude soon took place
In these poluted times
Heaven sent a Scourge to all our race
To expiate our Crimes

In pity to our deplored State
Heaven changed the mighty woe
All seeing what was wrapt in Fate
Must prove our overthrow

But what repentance have We shewn
To Heaven's indulgent care
Tho' Storms and Hurricanes We have known
When Roepstorff [2] governed here

[1] MS. bound with *The Royal Danish American Gazette* (Feb. 5, 1774), Royal Library.

[2] Note accompanying poem: 'These Gentlemen, when they governed St. Croix made the Happiness of the People, the rule of their conduct but —'

MAP OF ST. THOMAS (1767)
(Oldendorp's Geschichte der Mission, Barby, 1777)

MAP OF ST. CROIX 1767)
(Oldendorp's Geschichte der Mission, Barby, 1777)

[*Facing page 245*]

O! be that Name forever dear
While age to age shall roll
When Storms and Plagues and Famines near
Think on his generous Soul

In Vain We weep in Vain We Sigh
His Loss lament in vain
No friendly aid no help is nigh
Nought but despair and pain

For now behold an impious hand [3]
To curse our wretched race
Has dealt destruction round the land
And made the Stamps take place

May heaven appeased reverse our fate
While Horrors haunt his bed
And Sleepless vengeance ever wait
To blast his guilty head Amen.

After Baron von Pröck had turned the governor-generalship over to Clausen, he returned to Denmark. In the course of defending himself against the charge of too great leniency towards the planters, von Pröck presented some interesting statistics. The yield of sugar on St. Croix, which amounted to 3,457 hhds. in 1753, fell to 1910 hhds. in 1754. When his term began, in 1755, there were 8,897 slaves; when it ended, in 1766, there were not less than 16,956 slaves; the number had nearly doubled in eleven years. The increase in sugar sent to Europe was even more remarkable. While the governors under the Company had brought the exports from St. Croix from nothing to three and one-half ship loads during the interval from 1733 to 1755, von Pröck boasted that he had increased the number of annual cargoes to thirty-eight in 1766, an increase of eleven to one. During a single year of his term, forty-five ships had been sent to Europe from the colonies. Where there had been eight windmills for grinding sugar cane in 1754, there were

[3] 'The present Governor has levied a Tax by Way of Stamp on the Inhabitants of that Island, which greatly distresses them, especially those who were born in the British dominions, who forget they live in an arbitrary Government.'

sixty-three such mills twelve years later.[4] Where the Company's governors had tried in vain for half a century to come to an agreement with Porto Rico, he had by 1766 succeeded in establishing a "slave cartel" with the governor of the island. It was of course not the retiring governor's business to explain the part played by European conditions in bringing on this prosperous state of affairs.

The memory of the St. John insurrection lingered long in the minds of men. Various preventive measures were attempted by the authorities. Negroes were not permitted to gather in groups beyond a certain number and after certain specified hours. Owners were required to keep white managers constantly on the plantations. The negro rebellion that threatened St. Croix in 1746 was put down by a free negro, Mingo Tamarin,[5] who hunted down the troublesome runaways or *Marons*, brought them into submission and prevented an outbreak. The next serious trouble occurred under the royal régime in December, 1759, after a second interval of thirteen years. Although no overt act had been committed, the alleged conspirators were punished in exemplary fashion. Some of them "confessed," implicating themselves and others. Gibbet, stake, wheel, noose, glowing tong,—all were employed to impress upon the community the sinfulness of rebellion. Of the fourteen condemned to lose their lives, one managed to escape by suicide, but his dead body was dragged up and down the streets, thereafter suspended by one leg from the gallows, and finally taken down and burnt at the stake. The remainder suffered from one and one-half minutes to ninety-one hours of torture. Ten others were condemned to be sold out of the island, fifty-eight were acquitted, and six were reported as being still at

[4] The map reproduced on page 248 may have been submitted by von Pröck as part of the evidence in his defence. It gives the number of windmills by "quarters" as follows: West End Quarter, 5; the Prince's Q., 12; King's Q., 14; Queen's Q., 19; Company's Q., 12; North Side Q., "B," 1.

[5] Mingo had first been made a "captain" of the free negro "corps" by Governor Bredal in 1721; he had in 1733 been placed by Governor Gardelin at the head of a band of 300 faithful slaves and free negroes to assist in hunting down the St. John rebels and in holding the fort there against them. In 1758, he was again honored with the captaincy. Martfeldt MSS., III.

large—"free as birds." For each of those captured alive, the reward was 50 *rdl.*, for each one killed, 25 *rdl.*[6] The change in administration had evidently not affected the status of the negro. Yet within a third of a century the first important step to ameliorate the condition of the African race in America was taken in these selfsame islands. In all fairness it must be said that the treatment of the slave was probably no worse in the Danish than in the English, French and Dutch islands.

Denmark was the first state to attempt by law to prohibit its subjects from taking part in the African slave trade. This took place in the edict issued by King Christian VII on March 16, 1792. The constitutional provision by which this traffic was prohibited to citizens of the United States did not become effective until sixteen years after the issuance of the Danish edict. Curiously enough, a humane owner of large plantations in St. Croix, Ernest Schimmelmann, himself a director in a slave trading enterprise in 1782, was chiefly responsible for putting through this reform inaugurated by the A. P. Bernstorff ministry.

The planters who transferred their allegiance from the Company and king to the king alone were a curiously cosmopolitan lot. On St. Thomas and St. John the most persistent element in the population in 1765, when Martfeldt visited the islands, was the Dutch, of which about four-fifths was of Zeeland and Holland origin. The Danes came next in point of numbers, with probably less than half the strength of the Dutch. The remaining less numerous nationalities, given about in the order of their strength, were the French, Germans, English (from the islands), and Irish. The names of two families, one of Holland and one of French extraction, were listed by Martfeldt as "scorched" to indicate mixture with the black population.[7]

[6] *Species Facti over den paa Eilandet St. Croix i Aaret, 1759, intenderede Neeger Rebellion. Werlauff MSS.*, No. 22, Royal Library.

[7] *Martfeldt MSS.*, Vol. III. Twenty of the names listed are marked St. Croix, though the table is headed "Originen af Familierne paa St. Thomas og St. Jans." In a separate list of sixty-eight of St. John's inhabitants, Martfeldt has 21 as having come from St. Thomas, 16 from St. John, six each from "Sabbath" and Tortola, five from Denmark, four from St. Eustatius, three each

While the planters were being threatened and cajoled to free themselves from debts, now to Dutch creditors, now to the royal treasury, they managed to find entertainment in various places, from theaters to taverns, and other nondescript "houses of diversion." No form of diversion was too venal to carry advertising space in *The Royal Danish American Gazette.* At Christiansted the planters and their families might for twelve shillings per ticket secure seats in the Bass-End theater. Here at half past six in the evening could be seen the Leeward Islands company of comedians in their performance of King Lear, Hamlet, or Richard III. The evening usually closed with some dramatic presentation in lighter vein, such as "The Mock Doctor," "Flora, or Hob in the Well," or "The Virgin Unmaskt, or the Old Man Taught Wisdom." [8] Occasionally it was found necessary to check undue curiosity on the part of the blacks by the warning "No negro whatever in the house," while those white people who were privileged to enter the charmed semicircle were cautioned—in the public press—against attempting to get behind the scenes. Fredericksted in the "West End" also had its theater.

Although no utterances against the authorities were allowed publication, individuals not infrequently used this means of venting their spleens against their neighbors. "King Liar" is publicly warned against writing "any more impertinent messages" and against practicing "the servile trade of tale-bearing." One *J-c-b C-nt-r*, apparently a Jew, is charged with a striking resemblance to Judas Iscariot, and with refusing an invitation to dine "upon a pale looking piece of pork, much the color of his phiz." [9] At least thirteen taverns played their part in the life of St. Croix. Like Governor Clausen, when he labored in the interest of the royal treasury, they too found it necessary

from Ireland and St. Martin, and one apiece from Germany, Curaçao, Montserrat and St. Kitts.

[8] Other titles of popular farces and melodramas are: "The Beaux Stratagem," "The Fair Penitent," "The King and Miller of Mansfield," "The Cheats of Scapin," "Miss in her 'Teens," "The School Master's Ballet," "Damon and Phillida," "The Orphan, or The Unhappy Marriage," "The Inconstant, or the Way to Win him," "The Reprisal, or the Tars of Old England."

[9] *R. D. A. G.*, April 10, 1771.

MAP OF ST. CROIX, 1766

(Survey by J. M. Beck; engraved by O. H. de Lode, 1754; names of owners filled in, 1766) [*Facing page 248*]

to try to get on a cash basis. Clausen's vigorous administration soon revealed a regular system of smuggling, especially on the south side of St. Croix, opposite to the port of Christiansted.[10] An Englishman was found on the island practicing the dangerous art of counterfeiting.

Law-abiding traits and the higher aspects of civilization are not always reflected in the public records or the public press; but it seems clear that the population of the Danish islands was as ingenious and versatile as it was cosmopolitan. If the evidences of wickedness and extravagance are numerous, it must not be forgotten that times were good, and the means of indulgence plentiful.

The economic importance of the sugar producing regions was immensely enhanced during the Seven Years' War and the period following. When in the early seventies Alexander Hamilton was serving his apprenticeship as a counting-house clerk for the firm of Nicholas Cruger on St. Croix, he was near the economic center of gravity in the New World. The important position that sugar held in the minds of European statesmen is indicated by the fact that in 1763, when England and France were carrying on the negotiations that concluded the Seven Years' War, English statesmen considered seriously whether they should retain Canada or the French sugar island of Guadaloupe, a bit of land but little larger than St. Croix!

Compared with the few cargoes that the Company's officials managed to send to Copenhagen each year, the commercial activities that centered in St. Croix in the latter half of the eighteenth century were indeed considerable. Up to the outbreak of the War of Independence, the mainland English colonies were tremendously active in St. Croix as elsewhere in the West Indies. As the war proceeded, Danish shipping became more and more brisk. These islands had learned to look on European wars as great sources of prosperity, and this war was no exception. The following table, derived from the files of *The Royal Danish American Gazette* of St. Croix, will give a fair idea of the relative strength of the shipping of the

[10] *Amer. Journ., 1770–71* (July 29, 1770, Jan. 3, 1771).

English mainland colonies and of Denmark-Norway entered at St. Croix.[11]

	Total	Colon. Ships	Danish Ships		Total	Colon. Ships	Danish Ships
1770	14	7	7	1775	49	20	18
1771	21	5	13	1776	56	8	30
1772	16	10	4	1777	58	5	37
1773	49	35	7	1778	53	3	23
1774	65	34	23	1779	10	—	9

In April, 1764, the year following the close of the Seven Years' War, the trade of St. Thomas with other European colonies in America, was thrown open to the ships of all nations; trade to and from Europe was reserved for royal subjects, and the products of the islands, if sent to Europe at all, could be disposed of only in the harbors of Denmark, Norway, Schleswig, and Holstein.[12] The European trade of the islands was opened in 1767 to ships of other nations, though at higher rates. This freedom lasted but a decade when during the closing years of the American War, the monopoly plan was again attempted, only to be definitely given up in 1782. Ships of Danish subjects were allowed to take their cargoes to any European port. In 1815, the trade of St. Thomas and St. John was freed from all restrictions, so that European skippers were allowed equal privileges with those of America.

These changes did not affect the trade of St. Croix, where the royal ordinance of 1764 continued in force until 1823. In that year a royal resolution was published, allowing the importation of provisions and plantation accessories from any foreign port to St. Croix, and the exportation of an equal value of sugar to any such port. One result of this new ruling was the serious decline of the Copenhagen trade with St. Croix. It was not until June 6, 1833, on the hundredth anniversary of Denmark's possession of the island, that all trade restrictions in favor of Danish ports or Danish subjects were removed, and that St.

[11] The figures for 1770 apply only to the period from August 15 to December 26, those for 1771 to the first five months, those for 1772 to the second half year. Only the first two months of 1779 are included.

[12] H. U. Ramsing, "Handel og Skibsfart," in *Dansk Vestindien*, pp. 852–860.

Croix came to share with its island neighbors the distinction of being truly a "free haven."

The Peace of Versailles was followed by a serious commercial depression. This affected the West Indian commercial enterprises no less than it did economic conditions in the United States, which were then being forced into constitution-making by the logic of events that were largely economic in character. This return of good times came very opportunely for those who were interested in the success of the United States under the new constitution. An indication of this general prosperity is seen in the shipping situation in St. Croix in the first two years of President Washington's administration. In 1789, not less than 516 vessels entered at St. Croix. These were of all sizes, from schooners and sloops to brigs and ships. Eighty-two of these entered from ports in the United States, one hundred and twenty-three from Porto Rico, and only sixteen from Danish dominions in Europe. The records for 1790, though incomplete for December, show a similar result. The number that entered was 369, of which ninety-two came from the United States, forty-nine from Porto Rico, and twenty-one from Danish lands. In a single week in April, 1790, twenty-three vessels were entered at the St. Croix customs house.[13]

In the Napoleonic wars, Denmark-Norway became practically an ally of the French state. With British sea-power in the ascendancy this meant that Denmark's hold upon her West Indian possessions would become very uncertain at best. The situation indicated by Nelson's bombardment of Copenhagen in 1801, is reflected in the West Indies by the British seizure of the Danish islands in April, 1801, and their retention until February, 1802, when England and France were preparing to come to terms at Amiens. In 1807, when the Danish capital was bombarded the second time, the English once more seized the Danish islands. This time they retained them until the final defeat of Napoleon in 1815, when the islands were handed back to Denmark. The frontispiece to this volume is reproduced from a drawing made at this time to show the condition of St. Croix after Danish sovereignty had been restored.

[13] *The Royal Danish American Gazette,* for 1789 and 1790.

As a shipping center and distributing point for the West Indies, St. Thomas held a fairly enviable position for the period from about 1820 to 1850. In the decade 1821–1830 the tonnage of ships annually visiting St. Thomas harbor was more than double what it had been during the two decades preceding. An average of not less than 2,809 ships of a combined tonnage of 177,444 called there each year. During the decade 1831–1840, the ships averaged 2,557 and the tonnage 161,408. This was rather less than before, but after 1835 steamships begin to affect the situation. In the years 1841–1850 the number of ships fell to 2,169 a year, but the tonnage rose to 208,281. For 1850, ninety-one steamships are reported. The number of Danish-owned ships increased from 232 vessels of an aggregate tonnage of 17,448 in 1841 to 507 vessels of 35,507 tons displacement in 1850. This was an increase of more than one hundred per cent., brought about after Danish shipping had been obliged to compete with foreign shipping on even terms.

Commercially St. Thomas was a flourishing port in the forties. Its life centered about the harbor and the town of Charlotte Amalia. Of the 14,000 inhabitants of the island only 2,500, of whom more than nine-tenths were slaves, gained their living from the plantations. In 1839, there were forty-one large importing houses on the islands. Of these, thirteen were English, eleven French, six German, four Italian and Spanish, four American, and only three Danish or Danish West Indian. This situation had not seriously changed by 1850. The population was nearly as cosmopolitan in St. Thomas at that date as in the mining camps then opening in California.

After the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century the ratio of steam craft to sailing vessels steadily rose. It became possible to an increasing extent for the British and Spanish islands to import their goods direct from the producers. Islands like Porto Rico, Barbados, and Santa Lucia availed themselves less and less of St. Thomas as a staple port. Only as a coaling place does St. Thomas manage to attract attention as the nineteenth century closes. In the opening years of the twentieth century the increased use of the harbor by the Danish East Asiatic Company and the German Hamburg-American

Line has greatly increased the importance of St. Thomas as a coaling station. The tonnage has been larger in recent years than in the golden forties, but cargoes are no longer unloaded on the wharves and in the warehouses, hence tonnage is no index of the commercial situation. The following table shows the situation in St. Thomas harbor for the three-year period 1908–1910.

	1908	1909	1910
Ships entered [over 25 tons]	682	690	749
Boats entered [under 25 tons]	1,918	1,877	1,895
Coal imported [in tons]		77,555	103,505

The ships entered in 1910 included 38 war-ships, 446 merchant steamers and 265 sailing ships.

Two events must be held mainly responsible for the decline in the importance of sugar-cane plantations in the Lesser Antilles during the nineteenth century. The first is no doubt the development of the process discovered by the Berlin chemist Achard of making sugar from beets. The second disturbing circumstance was the demoralization of the labor market by the abolition, first of the slave trade, and later of slavery itself. For a community that had learned to depend almost solely upon a single staple as a means of livelihood, the shock was all but fatal. The following statistics of population will serve as an index to the economic condition of the islands.[14]

	St. Croix	*St. Thomas*	*St. John*	*Total*
1773	21,809	4,371	2,402	28,582
1796	28,803	4,734	2,120	36,657
1835	26,681	14,022	2,475	43,178
1850	23,720	13,666	2,228	39,614
1860	23,194	13,463	1,574	38,231
1880	18,430	14,389	944	33,763
1890	19,783	12,019	984	32,786
1901	18,590	11,012	925	30,527

During the period of the Napoleonic wars, the rise in the price of sugar led to the practical abandonment of cotton culture

[14] Bergsöe, *den danske Stats Statistik* (Kjöbenhavn, 1853), IV, 600; *Folketællingen paa de dansk vestindiske Öer* for 1860, etc.

on the Danish islands. St. Croix's maximum cotton export was reached in 1792 with 157,000 lbs.; the average annual export for the decade was perhaps 60,000. An attempt at reviving the cultivation of cotton was made in the era of high prices just preceding the Civil War. A fresh attempt was made in the course of that war, when the acreage was increased from seventy in 1863 to eight hundred in 1865. In the year 1865–1866, 71,000 lbs. were exported from St. Croix. Again cotton growing fell into disuse, not to be revived until the first decade of the twentieth century. Since the failure of the plan to sell the islands to the United States in 1902, patriotic Danes have organized an association for developing the agricultural resources, —a plantation society called "The Danish West Indies." This corporation has brought cotton culture to a higher point than has been attained hitherto.[15]

Sugar planting probably reached its maximum about 1796.[16] The acreage figures for that year make an instructive comparison with those for 1847, the year before slavery was abolished, and with 1851, five years after abolition.[17] The sugar acreage of St. Thomas and St. John had already dwindled to insignificance by 1851.

	St. Croix	*St. Thomas*	*St. John*
1796	27,655 A.	2,496 A.	1,863 A.
1847	23,971	1,125	843
1851	19,736		

The plow was rarely seen on a plantation in the eighteenth century. Emancipation brought the plow; here as elsewhere free labor had to compete with machinery. In 1796, Oxholm reports 119 windmills and 211 treadmills on the islands, of which 115 of the former and 144 of the latter were on St. Croix. The first steam-power sugar mill was erected on the Högensborg plantation on St. Croix in 1816, and the second in 1838. Power machinery raised the percentage of extracted cane-juice to seventy; wind or treadmills could yield only fifty-six per

[15] Capt. H. U. Ramsing, "Landbrug og Havebrug" in *Dansk Vestindien*, pp. 790–810.

[16] P. L. Oxholm, *De Danske Vestindiske Öers Tilstand*, "Statistisk Tabelle."

[17] H. U. Ramsing, in *Dansk Vestindien*, 795.

cent. By 1852 there were forty steam-propelled sugar mills on St. Croix. In 1908, there was but a single sugar mill upon each of the islands of St. Thomas and St. John, and only the St. John mill was in operation.

A period of drought in the early seventies led to the establishment of an elaborate coöperative sugar factory at Christiansted in 1877–1878. It was hoped by centralization to reduce the expense of manufacture. The new machinery could extract eighty per cent. of the juice, and the idea spread to various of the larger plantations. The "Danish West Indies" corporation has carried the idea of centralization in production and manufacture to a far higher point than has formerly been attempted. In 1910 there were on St. Croix four large factories producing crystallized sugar. Six smaller establishments still produced "muscovado" sugar in the ancient way.

The annual sugar yield on the two older islands at specified periods was as follows:

	St. Thomas	*St. John*
About 1796	1,300,000 lbs.	850,000 lbs.
1821–26	1,444,000 "	1,100,000 "
1838–40	1,164,000 "	993,000 "

As early as 1755, when the period of royal government began, St. Croix was already producing one and one-half million pounds of sugar. This was more than St. Thomas produced at any time in its history. By 1770, the production on St. Croix had increased to about 17,000,000 lbs., nearly twelve times; in the early eighties it had risen to 25,000,000. In the mid-eighties, in that "critical period" preceding the adoption of the American constitution, the yield fell to 16,650,000 lbs. In the opening years of the nineteenth century the annual production rose to about 32,460,000, the maximum apparently being reached in 1812, with 46,000,000 lbs. Since the Napoleonic period the yearly sugar production on St. Croix at various dates was approximately as follows:

1820	24,300,000 lbs.	1860–70	15,730,000 lbs.
1830	23,690,000 "	1872–77	9,300,000 "
1840	20,000,000 "	1874	4,577,000 "
1850–55	15,000,000 "	1880–90	19,000,000 "
1855–60	13,400,000 "	1900–10	24,700,000 "

More advanced methods of cultivation and manufacture have finally brought the production up almost to the point that it was ninety-six years ago, and that from a smaller area. An evidence of this greater efficiency is seen in the increase in the annual yield per acre from 18,638 lbs. of cane in 1878–1883 to 26,020 lbs. in 1897–1902. The increasing difficulties to which the growing of sugar cane was subjected as the nineteenth century ran its course, made the islands more and more dependent upon the Danish treasury. Whereas they had earlier in the century been colonies commanding respect, they were like the British islands rapidly lapsing into the position of dependencies calling for state subsidies. With no relief in sight except subsidies, it only required a favorable opportunity to suggest the feasibility of selling. Such an opportunity presented itself as a result of the situation growing out of the Civil War.

Before taking up the diplomacy that eventually led to the sale of the islands to the United States, a brief consideration of recent local conditions upon the islands should not be without interest, especially to American readers. "The Danish West Indies" plantation company above referred to was organized largely from patriotic motives. The impulse came after the collapse of the attempted negotiations for sale to the United States in 1901–1902. With a maximum capital of 1,316,316 *kroner* ($365,277), and despite the introduction of steam plows, new breeds of live stock, new varieties of plants including the spineless cactus from Burbank's California gardens, despite increased rotation of crops, such as banana and alfalfa, despite the advice of British West Indian experts, this plantation experiment has been a losing proposition as a business enterprise. The company's books showed a net gain in only four years of the eleven-year period from 1904–1914, inclusive. The total net loss for the eleven-year period was not less than 618,638.77 *kroner* ($171,650). The chief reasons advanced for this unfortunate outcome were, a series of unusually dry seasons, and a number of severe storms.

The company has also had considerable trouble with its labor supply during its career. The demand for workers on the Panama Canal drew many negroes off the Danish as it did off

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ST. THOMAS HARBOR: LOOKING WESTWARD

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the other West Indian islands. Hence the price of labor rose higher than local conditions would warrant. As on previous occasions, hard times has brought unrest among the negro population. In 1915, the negroes decided among themselves that their condition was so serious that it merited the immediate attention of the Danish government and people. They appointed one of their number, Mr. D. Hamilton Jackson, as their special representative, and sent him to Copenhagen to present their claims for amelioration of their condition. For a time the situation looked so threatening in St. Croix, the center of the disturbance, that the Danish government decided to send a warship to Christiansted. Mr. Jackson's visit received a great deal of attention from the Danish public and press. After his return, in November, 1915, he started a newspaper, *The Labor Union*, which is still being published.

Previous to the outbreak of the Civil War, the interest of the United States in Caribbean lands had mainly been directed towards Cuba by the slave-holding interests which looked there for possible extension of slavery territory. But during the war, the lack of a naval base in the Caribbean Sea proved so costly an experience to the United States in its efforts to prevent blockade-running that the Lincoln administration decided to do what was possible to remedy this situation. The program of Secretary of State Seward included a larger number of projects than was practicable under the confused political conditions following the assassination of Lincoln. The expulsion of the French from Mexico and the purchase of Alaska were accomplished, but the purchase of a Canal strip and the Danish West Indian islands was deferred to a later date and then consummated at a far higher cost than would have been necessary in Seward's time.[18]

Seward broached the purchase project to General Raaslöff, the Danish minister at Washington, in January, 1865, but without securing any assurance that Denmark was willing to sell. In December, 1865, after Seward's recovery from the wounds

[18] See W. F. Johnson, "The Story of the Danish Islands," in *The North American Review* for Sept., 1916, for a useful summary of recent efforts at purchase. This comprehensive review forms the basis for much of what follows.

he had received at the same time that Lincoln was attacked, the Secretary, with President Johnson's approval, again brought the matter forward. Following the defeat of Denmark by the combined Austro-Prussian forces, and her loss of the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, the Danish Ministry that assumed control of the government under these circumstances proved willing to consider the matter formally and inquired what the United States was willing to pay. The negotiations were conducted mainly in Copenhagen where the United States was represented by George H. Yeaman. After making a personal tour of investigation to the islands and listening to the report of an army officer who had been sent to make an appraisal of their worth, Seward concluded to offer the Danish government five million dollars in gold. By this time (1866), the situation in Europe had undergone a change. Prussia was now engaged in a struggle with her former ally, Austria, for the hegemony of the German Empire, and until that was settled, Denmark, still smarting under the loss of the duchies was not in a position to take a step that seemed likely to be resented by Prussia. The English foreign office under Earl Russell had also shown its distrust of the plan.

Another serious obstacle was France. By the treaty negotiated with France in 1733, for the purchase of St. Croix, Denmark had bound herself not to sell that island to any other power without the consent of the French king. The Mexican situation was seriously straining the relations of the United States with the Emperor Napoleon III, who refused his consent to the transaction. Denmark, unwilling to risk the displeasure of France, made an offer in the spring of 1867 for the sale of St. Thomas and St. John to the United States government for the sum of five million dollars, and indicated her willingness to sell St. Croix for a similar price, provided France could be induced to give its consent. Minister Yeaman finally made a treaty with the Danish government in October, 1867, providing for the purchase of the two northern islands for $7,500,000. The consent of the Danish Senate or *Landsthing* was necessary, as was that of the United States Senate. Seward gave his unofficial consent to the holding of an election on the

islands to ascertain the will of the inhabitants. He did not wish to hamper Congress in any action it might take to settle the status of the islands. It turned out that both houses of the Danish diet gave their consent, and that the plebiscite on the islands carried in favor of annexation by the nearly unanimous vote of 1,244 to 22. The sole remaining obstacle was the Senate of the United States, and there the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee was Senator Charles Sumner, the implacable enemy of President Johnson. A considerable share of the wrath that was piling up against the President had to be borne by the head of his cabinet. To have followed up the purchase of Alaska by the purchase of the Danish islands might have enhanced popularity of the administration, and this was not desired by Sumner and the anti-administration forces. The treaty was consequently pigeonholed. Denmark granted an extension of time for ratification, first to Seward, and then to his successor, Hamilton Fish. But the Grant administration was only less distasteful to Sumner than the one it displaced, so on April 14, 1870, the treaty was allowed to lapse, and the government was placed in the position of refusing its assent to a treaty which it had initiated.

The United States was saved from an exceedingly embarrassing position through the circumstance that Denmark made no attempt to sell the islands to any other power. The Danish government broached the matter again late in Harrison's administration, during the secretaryship of John W. Foster, but the matter was not pressed because of fear that the incoming Cleveland administration might repudiate the transaction before it had been completed. The third time that the matter was called to the attention of the government of the United States was in Cleveland's administration, but the administration that refused to consider the annexation of Hawaii could not be expected to purchase the Danish islands. Denmark continued its considerate attitude by refraining from seeking other purchasers.

When after the Spanish-American war the question of purchase came up for a fourth time, the chances for successful negotiation seemed promising. Secretary John Hay, the head

of President Roosevelt's cabinet, and the Danish minister, Count Constantine Brun, discussed the project late in 1901, and a treaty was promptly formulated providing for the purchase of the islands at the price first offered by Seward, five million dollars. The French government—now the Third Republic—made no objection to the inclusion of St. Croix. The treaty was negotiated in January, 1902. On February 17, the United States Senate atoned for its previous dog-in-the-manger position by prompt ratification. This time the opposition came from another quarter. The *Folkething*, the popular house of the Danish Parliament, readily gave its assent but in the *Landsthing* the treaty failed of confirmation by a tie vote. This adverse vote has been generally assumed in the United States to have been due to German influence. Several circumstances have lent color to this view. During the Spanish-American war, popular opinion in Germany was very strongly opposed to the United States. The attitude of Admiral Dietrichs indicated an unexpected impatience on the part of the German government towards American plans in the Orient. Likewise in the Caribbean Sea that government found itself arousing the apprehension of the United States in its dealings with Latin American states, much as England had done in the Venezuela affair during Cleveland's administration. The rapid development of the great German shipping lines, such as the Hamburg-American, gives the observer no reason to doubt that Germany would welcome the chance to acquire St. Thomas or any other suitable port or coaling station in the neighborhood of the Panama Canal. Whatever may have been the actual facts, the treaty was not confirmed by the Danish upper house, and apparently German commercial interests were not displeased with having St. Thomas remain under Danish rule. The reasons for the bungling that took place in 1911–1912 when the scheme was again considered, have not yet fully come to light. Through the injudicious actions of certain private individuals, the diplomatists found themselves obliged to defer formal action to a more opportune time. It is significant of the American position that when the Danish company, that had been formed to deepen and improve St. Thomas harbor, con-

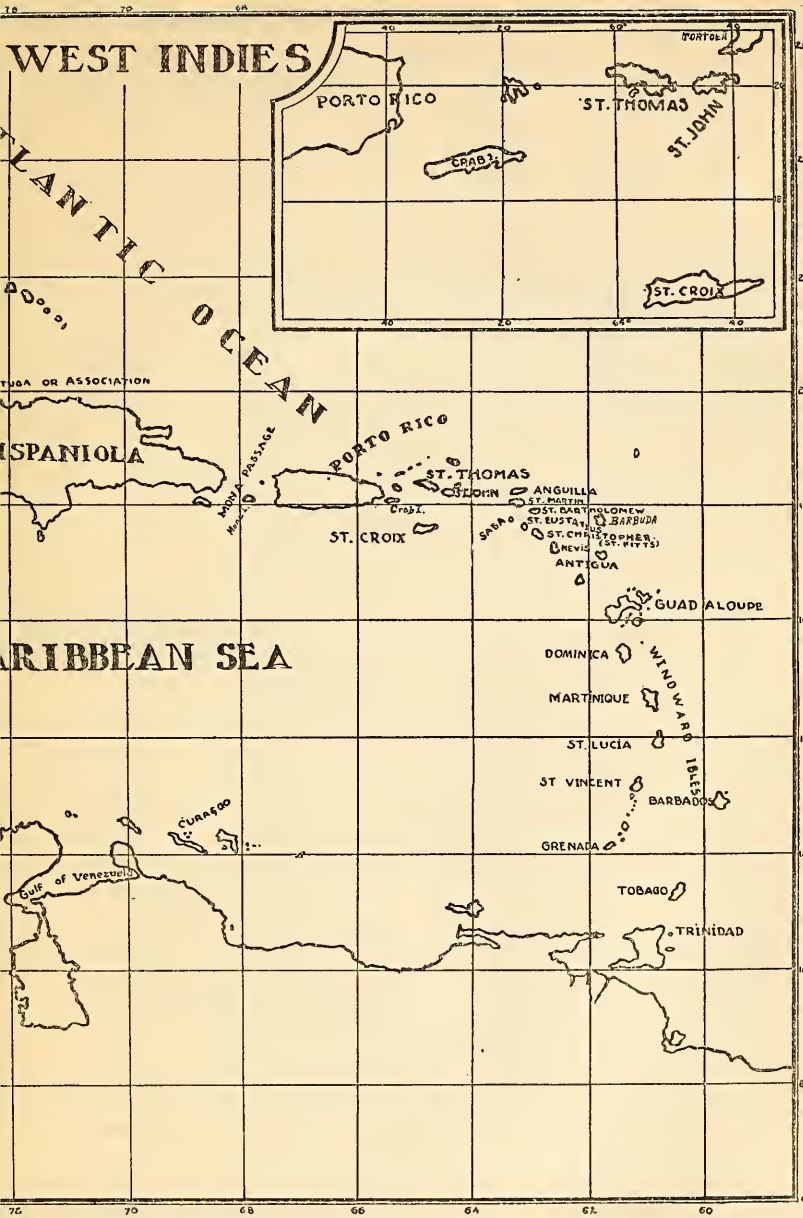
sidered the securing of foreign, and especially German, capital for assistance in carrying through its original plans, the government of the United States promptly indicated that such a measure would not meet with its approval. The plans of the company were modified and carried out on a smaller scale with Danish capital.

The plan to sell the islands, when finally disclosed to the Danish public by the Zahle ministry in 1916, met with vigorous and determined opposition. There is no apparent reason for suspecting German influence as a factor of importance in this connection. Several of the most influential anti-German newspapers labored most valiantly to defer the sale, at least until after the war. University professors, economists, men of science, well known religious leaders, men of business,—all classes furnished ardent opponents to the sale of the islands at this time; and these men were probably overwhelmingly anti-German. There appears to have been considerable quiet but effective activity exerted in favor of the proposed sale by some of the leading business men, especially those connected with the Danish East Asiatic Company. When the matter came before the Danish people for their decision in December, 1916, the vote in favor of the ministerial plan for sale stood 283,694 to 157,596.

And now, more than half a century after negotiations were initiated, and in the progress of a mighty world war, the United States has finally purchased the Danish West Indian islands. The purchase price, $25,000,000, represents a greater sum than has been paid for any of its acquisitions, not excepting Louisiana and the Philippines. The islands passed under the sovereignty of the United States on January 17, 1917, when Secretary Lansing and Minister Brun exchanged ratifications of the treaty of cession. The United States flag was hoisted on the three "Virgin Islands of America" on March thirty-first. Rear-admiral James H. Oliver was named as the first American governor.

It is nearly two hundred and fifty years since the oldest of the islands first came into Danish possession. As they have long been economically American, they will henceforth be polit-

ically American. Their future lies in the lap of Fate and of the Congress of the United States. In annexing them the United States has acquired a harbor that shares with Samana Bay, San Domingo, the distinction of deserving—to quote the words of Admiral Mahan—"paramount consideration in a general study of the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico." The United States has taken another distinct and important step towards establishing American influence in the lands that lie to the north of Panama in securing the Leeward gateway to the American Mediterranean.



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The chief repository of first-hand material dealing with the Danish West India and Guinea Company is the Danish State Archives (*Rigsarkivet*) in Copenhagen. The entire official records of the Company, except such portions as are to be found in the *Landsarkiv*, are piled high on the shelves of the topmost story of the archives building, where their repose has rarely been disturbed. The materials in the *Landsarkiv*, or provincial archives, consist chiefly of official documents dealing presumably with the local history of the Danish islands. It appears that these records were brought to Denmark from the West Indies only about twenty-five years ago, but have suffered so from climatic conditions and the ravages of tropical insects that they are not available for the use of scholars. The Gardelin and Schweder letter-books now in the Bancroft Collection at Berkeley, California, were presumably a part of these local archives.

The Company's records kept at Copenhagen do not appear to have been accessible until J. F. Krarup, who became assistant in the state archives in 1870 and first secretary and registrar in 1882, proceeded to arrange and label the materials. The Company's archives are divided into three parts, corresponding to the principal scenes of its activity—Copenhagen, the West Indies, and Guinea—and each department contains the matter which normally gravitated towards that place.

The manuscript materials in the Copenhagen municipal archives (*Raadstuearkivet*) and in the Royal Library which deal with the Danish West Indian possessions are few in number but of real importance. Their source will be noted in the bibliography. The library of the University of Copenhagen apparently contains little of vital importance that cannot be found in one or the other of the above collections.

One repository remains to be considered, the Bancroft Collection at Berkeley, California, referred to above. The manuscript material there to be found, necessarily fragmentary, but by no means negligible, was collected about thirty years ago by Alphonse Pinart, who made a tour of investigation and collection over Spanish, English, French, Dutch and Swedish, as well as Danish islands. The part secured at St. Thomas consists not only of copies of official orders and correspondence,

but of a number of originals. These materials were later acquired by Mr. H. H. Bancroft and are now in the custody of the University of California.

In the writing of Chapter I, the author has in the main followed the work of J. Frederick Krarup, whose long service in the archives gave him a unique opportunity to work out an authoritative and indeed a microscopic account of the first Danish governor. A careful checking up of Krarup's work on Governor Iversen soon revealed the futility of retracing his footsteps. Krarup's biography of Milan has also been followed in Chapter III in so far as it deals with the West Indian career of that strange character. In the chapter dealing with the Brandenburg African Company's experience in the West Indies, Schück's exhaustive account (q. v.) has been freely used, but it has been checked up and supplemented with documentary material from the Company's archives which Dr. Schück did not examine. In the remainder of the work the author has had to rely chiefly upon unpublished documentary material.

Although the major part of the materials are in Danish, a few are in German, the language of the court, some in French, and a considerable number in Dutch, which was the prevailing tongue among the St. Thomas and St. John planters in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

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Contemporary account of Governor Iversen's death, and of punishment of responsible mutineers.

Paludan, Capt. C. F.

"Blade af de dansk-vestindiske Öers Historie," in *Museum* (Kjöbenhavn, 1894), 341–366.

An account of the St. John slave insurrection of 1733–1734 and its suppression, illustrated by unpublished documents from the St. Thomas archives, copied before their removal to Copenhagen.

Rördam, Holger Fr. [*ed.*]

"Bidrag til Historieskriveren Anders Höjers Levned," in *Historiske Samlinger og Studier vedr. Danmarks Forhold og Personligheder især i det 17. Aarhundrede*, III, 144 *et seq.* Kjöbenhavn, 1898. 4 v.

Of the commission appointed in 1726 to report on the affairs of the Danish East India Company, some mention is made.

Rördam, Holger Fr.

"Kirkelige Forhold paa St. Croix 1741 og danske Præster paa de vestindiske Öer i Midten af 18. Aarhundre" in *Kirkehistoriske Samlinger*, ser. 4, v. II. (Kjöbenhavn, 1891), 55–100.

This article includes an interesting letter from the Lutheran minister H. J. O. Stoud to President C. A. von Plessen of the West India and Guinea Company, dated Jan. 11, 1741, and biographical sketches of the Danish Lutheran ministers on St. Croix, 1735–1769, and of the ministers on St. Thomas and St. John, 1732–1765.

Rothe, Casper Peter. [*ed.*]

Kong Christian den Femtes skrevne Befalinger og Anordninger, eller Rescripter for Norge, Island, Ferröerne og de Indiske Besiddelser fra . . . 9de Februarii 1670 til . . . 25 Augusti, 1699. Kjöbenhavn, 1777. 2 v. (1153 p.)

Vol. II, 993 *et seq.*, contains the text of the ordinances, etc., issued by Christian V during his reign, and which concerned the West Indies and Guinea.

Schou, Jacob Henric. [*ed.*]

Chronologisk Register over Kongelige Forordninger. . . . Kjöbenhavn, 1777–1814.

Schück, Richard.

Brandenburg-Preussens Kolonial-Politik . . . (1647–1721). Leipsig, 1889. 2 v.

Volume II contains many documents bearing on Denmark's and Brandenburg's relations with respect to Guinea and West India matters.

[Swedish Ambassadors.]

Reports in "Danske Samlinger for Historie" (periodical edited by Chr. Bruun, O. Nielsen, and A. Peterson). Kjöbenhavn, 1865–1875. 6 vols.

The letters of Swedish ambassadors at Copenhagen to their royal masters afford glimpses of the early career of the Company.

Secondary Works

Special Works on the Danish Colonies:

Alberti, C.

"Den danske Slavehandels Historie," in *Nyt historisk Tidsskrift*, 3 B. (Kjöbenhavn, 1850, 201–245).

A valuable account, based on printed primary and secondary material. The author was not permitted to inspect the state archive materials.

Börgeson, F., and Uldall, F. P.

Vore vestindiske Öer. Kjöbenhavn, 1900. 55 p.

Catteau-Calleville, J. R. G.

Tableau des États danois, considérés sous le rapport du mécanisme social. Paris, 1802. 3 vol.

"De danske Atlanterhavsöer."

"Dansk Vestindien: Naturforhold, Befolkning, Hjælpekilder, og Næringsveje" in "*De danske Atlanterhavsöer*" *Afsnit* IV. Kjöbenhavn, 1908. 300 p. Maps.

A copiously illustrated, collaborative work, with brief résumés of early history, but with main emphasis on present conditions. Lists of authorities are appended to many of the articles.

Dewitz, A. von.

In Dänisch Westindien. Anfange der Brüdermission in St. Thomas, St. Croix, and St. Jan, von 1732–1760. Herrnhut, 1899. 322 p.

Dewitz, A. von.

In Dänisch Westindien. Hundert und fünfzig Jahre der Brüdermission in St. Thomas, St. Croix, und St. Jan. . . . Niesky, 1884. 374 p.

Eggers, H. F. A. Baron.

"St. Croix's Flora" in *Videnskabelige Meddelelser fra Naturhistorisk Forening i Kjöbenhavn for Aaret 1876.* Kjöbenhavn, 1876. pp. 33–158.

An admirable description of St. Croix, particularly from the botanical and meteorological points of view, with an exposition of historical changes in plant life there.

GRIFFIN, APPLETON PRENTISS CLARK.

A list of books on the Danish West Indies. Washington, 1901. 20 p.

The only special bibliography on the subject, limited to books in Library of Congress.

HAAGENSEN, RICHARD.

Beskrivelse over Eylandet St. Croix i America i Vestindien. Kjöbenhavn, 1758, 72 p.

Probably the earliest printed book describing St. Croix. The university and royal libraries in Copenhagen each have MS. as well as printed copies.

HOFFMEYER, H.

Vor Kirke i Vestindien. Kjöbenhavn, 1905.

HÖST, GEORG. HERSING.

Efterretninger om den Sanct Thomas og dens Gouverneurer, optegnede der paa Landet fra 1769 indtil 1776. Kjöbenhavn, 1791. 203 p.

This is the first attempt at a chronological history of the Danish West Indies. The author had access to the Company's archives, and used some of the documents for his book. From 1769 to 1776 he lived in the islands, first as a member of the privy council of St. Thomas and St. John, and later, on the death of his father-in-law, Governor Jens Kragh, as governor-*ad interim* for a few months. During 1760–1767 he had served as an employee in the Danish factory in Morocco, and on his return he became a secretary in the department for foreign affairs, under Guldberg. He died in 1794. (Nyerup and Kraft, *Forfatter-Lexicon,* p. 280.)

ISERT, P. E.

"Reise nach Guinea und den Carabaischen Inseln," in *Columbien, in Briefen an seine Freunden beschreiben.* Kjöbenhavn, 1788. 376 p.

Although inclined to exaggeration, the author, who had been chief physician in the Danish factory in Guinea and had served on slave ships, presents a valuable picture of the dark side of the slave trade. Letter 12 is headed "*Reise von Guinea nach Westindien. Zustand eines Sklavenschiffes. Rebellion der Sklaven. Beschreibung von St. Croix.*"

KNOX, HUGH.

A discourse delivered on the 6 of Sept. 1772 in the Dutch Church of St. Croix. On the occasion of the hurricane which hap-

pened on the 31 of Aug. St. Croix, 1772. The copy in the Bancroft Collection is incomplete.

KNOX, JOHN P.

A historical account of St. Thomas, W. I., . . . and incidental notices of St. Croix and St. Johns. New York, 1852. 271 p.

This book has long been practically the only available book in English. The first part of it is really a faulty translation of Höst's work (q. v.), the last, a loose compilation. The author was a minister in St. Thomas.

KOCH, HANS LUDVIG SCHIELDERUP PARELIUS.

"Den danske mission i Vestindien," in *Kirkehistoriske Samlinger*, ser. 5, vol. 3 (Kjöbenhavn, 1905), 144–181.

An account of those missionary efforts begun by the government in 1755.

KRARUP, JANUS FREDRIK.

"Jörgen Iversen (Dyppel), Vestindisk Compagnies förste Gouverneur paa St. Thomas," in *Personalhistorisk Tidsskrift*, II R. 6 B. (Kjöbenhavn, 1891), 23–45.

An exhaustive study of Governor Iversen's career and the planting of the St. Thomas colony, based on a minute examination of primary materials in the state archives at Copenhagen. Krarup became an assistant in the state archives in 1870, and chief secretary in 1882.

KRARUP, JANUS FREDRIK.

"Gabriel Milan og Somme af hans Samtid" in *Personalhistorisk Tidsskrift*, 3 R. 2 B. (Kjöbenhavn, 1893), 102–130, and 3 R. 3 B. (1894), 1–51.

A detailed and accurate account of the life of the fourth governor of St. Thomas, based upon exhaustive researches in the state archives at Copenhagen.

LAWAETZ, H.

Brödremenighedens Mission: Dansk-Vestindien, 1769–1848. Kjöbenhavn, 1902. 256 p.

The main account is prefaced by a good summary of the early Moravian missionary efforts in the Danish West Indies.

LOSE, EMIL VALDEMAR.

"Folkekirken paa St. Thomas" in *Kalkars Theologisk Tidsskrift* (Köbenhavn, 1878), 265–297.

LOSE, EMIL VALDEMAR.

The Lutheran Church in the West Indies. St. Croix, 1887. 6 p.

LOSE, EMIL VALDEMAR.

"Kort Udsigt over den danske lutherske Missions Historie paa St. Croix, St. Thomas, og St. Jan," in *Nordisk Missions Tidsskrift*, I (Kjöbenhavn, 1890), 1–37.

This account, according to Pastor L. Koch, is the most au-

thoritative one dealing with the history of Danish missions in the West Indies.

OLDENDORP, CHRISTIAN GEORG ANDREAS.

Geschichte der Mission der evangelischen Brüder auf der carabaischen Inseln S. Thomas, S. Croix und S. Jan. Barby, 1777. 2 v.

Still the most accurate and comprehensive account of the early history of the Moravian brethren in the Danish islands.

[OLDENDORP, CHRISTIAN GEORG ANDREAS].

Fuldstændigt Udtog af C. G. A. Oldendorps Missions-Historie om den evangeliske Brödres Mission paa de carabaiske Öer St. Thomas, St. Crux og St. Jan. . . . Kjöbenhavn, 1784. 184 p.

A Danish abridged version of the German edition.

OLDENDORP, CHRISTIAN GEORG ANDREAS.

Historisk Beretning om de hedenske Neger-Slavers Omvendelse paa de danske Öer i Vestindien. . . . Kjöbenhavn, 1784, 184 p.

A translation from the German of part of the author's larger work (*q. v.*).

[ÖRSTED, ANDER S., and others.]

"De danske vestindiske Öer," in Bergsöe, *Den danske Stats Statistik, 4de Bd.* (Kjöbenhavn, 1853), pp. 557–712.

A good summary of the history, geography, etc., of the islands, based on available published material. The notes give some valuable bibliographical hints.

OXHOLM, PETER LOTHARIUS.

De danske vestindiske öers Tilstand i Henseende til Population, Cultur og Finance-Forfatning i Anledning af nogle Breve fra St. Croix. . . . Kjöbenhavn, 1797. 84 p.

A careful study of the sugar industry on St. Croix based on personal observation; contains four plans and an appended statistical table.

[ANONYMOUS. ANSWER TO OXHOLM. (*q. v.*).]

Berigtigelsen ved Hr. Major Oxholms Skrift om de danske Öers Tilstand. Kjöbenhavn, 1798. 30 p.

OXHOLM, PETER LOTHARIUS.

Urigtighederne i de saakaldte Berigtigelser ved Afhandlingen om de danske vestindiske Öers Tilstand. Kjöbenhavn, 1798. 23 p.

An answer to *Berigtigelsen. . . .*

PETERSEN, BERNHARDT VON.

En historisk Beretning om de dansk-vestindiske Öer St. Croix, St. Thomas og St. Jan. Kjöbenhavn, 1855.

Mainly a translation of Knox's work, checked up by some

reference to Höst. His name is not to be found among those of the nobility.

Rohr, Julius Philip Benjamin von.

Anmerkungen über den Cattunbau. Mit einer Vorrede von P. G. Hensler. Altona und Leipzig, 1791–1793. 2 parts.

Part 1: "*Zum Nutzen der Dänischen Westindischen Colonien auf Allerhöchsten Königlichen Befehl geschrieben.*"

Rothe, Dr. C.

Lidt om Vestindien. Kjöbenhavn, 1900. 55 pp.

A patriotic appeal against the sale of the islands; a brief but fairly accurate historical summary is included.

Schmidt, J. C.

[*Articles on St. Croix*] in *Samleren*, v. II (Kjöbenhavn, 1788), 198–206; 214–250; 259–263.

A series of articles by a visitor describing plantation life on St. Croix.

Taylor, Charles Edward.

Leaflets from the Danish West Indies; descriptive of the social, political, and commercial condition of these islands. London, 1888. 228 p.

One of the few writers who has made use of archival material for the early history of St. Thomas. The author was a physician and book-dealer in St. Thomas, and had access to the Company's archives before their removal to Copenhagen.

Trier, C. A.

"Det dansk-vestindiske Negerindeförselsforbud af 1792," in *Historisk Tidsskrift*, ser. 7, v. 5 (Kjöbenhavn, 1904–1905), 405–508.

A scholarly study of the edict abolishing the slave trade in Danish dominions, and of the circumstances leading up to it.

United States.

Fifty-seventh Congress, first session. House document, vol. 47 (Washington, 1902), 2767–2847.

A geographical and historical description of the islands compiled by Oscar Phelps Austin and drawn mainly from Knox and Höst; summary of commercial conditions since 1884; extracts from consular reports, histories, etc., including Prof. C. W. Tooke's article in the Amer. Econ. Assoc. report for 1900 (pp. 2782 *et seq.*), a concise summary of the administrative arrangements. The treaty of 1902 with Denmark is quoted and the various efforts at purchase by the U. S. traced out and illustrated with documents (pp. 2788 *et seq.*).

Werfel, Johannes.

Efterretning om de danske-vestindiske Öers St. Croix's, St. Thomas's og St. Jan's. Kjöbenhavn, 1801.

WEST, HANS.
"Beretning om det danske Eiland St. Croix i Vestindien, fra Juniimaaned 1789 til Juniimaaneds Udgang 1790," in *Maanedskriftet Iris* (Kjöbenhavn) *Julii 1791*, pp. 1–88.
An article on plantation economy in the Danish islands, based on a brief stay there as rector of a school. This article was expanded into the book ". . . *Beskrivelse over St. Croix* . . ." (1793).
WEST, HANS.
Bidrag til Beskrivelse over Ste. Croix, med en kort udsigt over St. Thomas, St. Jean, Tortola, Spanishtown, og Crabeneiland. Kjöbenhavn, 1793. 363 p.
An enlarged edition appeared in a German translation in 1794.

General Works on Danish and West Indian History:

ALLEN, C. F.
Histoire de Danemark. . . . (E. Beauvois, tr.). Copenhague, 1878. 2 v.
This work has been superseded, especially in its treatment of economic history, by the more recent work of Professor Edward Holm (*q. v.*).
[ANONYMOUS.]
The Importance of the British plantations in America to this kingdom . . . considered. London, 1731. 114 p.
"Santa Croce" (St. Croix) is mentioned as being abandoned, and St. Thomas as remarkable only for its harbor, which is a free port, and for smuggling (*cf.* Macpherson, *Annals*, III, 161).
[ANONYMOUS].
The Present state of the West Indies, containing an accurate description of what parts are possessed by the several powers in Europe. . . . London, 1788. 95 p.
Pp. 72–74, Virgin Islands; pp. 93–94, Danish Islands.
BONNASSIEUX, JEAN LOUIS PIERRE MARIE.
Les grandes compagnies de commerce. Paris, 1892. 562 p.
A cursory review of the activities of the Danish West India and Guinea Company (p. 441) and of the Danish African Company (pp. 442–443), based largely on Beausobre's work (1791).
BURNEY, JAMES.
History of the Buccaneers of America. London, 1816. 326 p.
Mentions St. Thomas as a "Danish factory" (p. 300) plundered by "Flibustiers" from Hispaniola in 1688 (*cf.* Labat).
CHEYNEY, EDWARD POTTS.
European background of American history: 1300–1600, in

American Nation ser. A. B. Hart *ed.* New York and London, 1904. 343 p.
List of commercial companies, 1554–1698, pp. 137–139.

DAVIES, JOHN.
The history of the Caribby-Islands, viz. Barbados, St. Christophers, St. Vincents, Martinico, etc., etc., . . . in all XXVIII. London, 1666. 2 v.
St. Croix under the French in I, 28.

DESSALLES, ADRIAN.
Histoire générale des Antilles. Paris, 1847. 3 v.
Brief mention of the Danish islands.

DOUGLASS, WILLIAM.
A summary, historical and political, of the first planting, progressive improvements, and present state of the British settlements in North America. Boston, 1755. 3 v.
Pp. 140–141: St. Thomas and St. John.

DU TERTRE, LE R. P. JEAN-BAPTISTE.
Histoire générale des Antilles habitées par les François. Paris, 1667–1671. 4 vols. in three.
Contains a map of St. Croix under the French (1671); a valuable work for the history of the Danish islands previous to Danish occupation.

EDWARDS, BRYAN.
The history, civil and commercial, of the British colonies in the West Indies. London, 1793. 2 v.
Makes a bare mention of the Danish possessions. St. John "is of importance as having the best harbour of any island to the leeward of Antigua;" while St. Croix is notable for its sugar smuggling (I, 458–459).

FISKE, AMOS KIDDER.
The West Indies . . . in Story of the Nations ser. New York, 1902. 414 p.
Pp. 293–301: the Danish islands.

FRIDERICIA, J. A. *See* STEENSTRUP.

FROUDE, JAMES ANTHONY.
The English in the West Indies. . . . New York, 1908. 550 p.

GIGAS, EMIL.
Grev Bernardino de Rebolledo, spansk Gesandt i Kjöbenhavn, 1648–1659. Kjöbenhavn, 1883. 413 p.

HARING, CLARENCE HENRY.
The buccaneers in the West Indies in the XVII century. New York, 1910. 298 p.
The relations of early Danish governors in the West Indies (the Esmits and Iversen) to the pirates there is discussed in a

rather one-sided account based solely upon the Calendar of State Papers, Colonial, West Indies.

HOLM, EDVARD.

Danmarks-Norges Indre Historie, under Enevolden fra 1660 til 1720. Kjöbenhavn, 1885. 2 v.

All of Professor Holm's work is based on a careful study of first-hand material. His treatment of economic problems is especially thorough.

HOLM, EDVARD.

Den Dansk-Norske Stats Historie fra 1720 til 1814. Kjöbenhavn.

HOLM, EDVARD. *See* STEENSTRUP.

JAMESON, JOHN FRANKLIN.

"St. Eustatius in the American Revolution," in *The American Historical Review*, VIII (New York, 1903), pp. 683–708.

St. Croix is reported to be the first foreign port to salute the American flag (p. 691).

JOHNSTON, SIR HARRY H.

The negro in the New World. New York, 1910. 499 p.

"Slavery under the Danes" (344–351) is a brief, inaccurate résumé of the history of Danish slave trade and West Indian colonization.

KELLER, ALBERT GALLOWAY.

Colonization. New York, 1908. 630 p.

Although mainly based on secondary works, this is the most recent and reliable summary in English on the Danish islands (497–508). The book is provided with a bibliography.

KOCH, HANS LUDVIG SCHIELDERUP PARELIUS.

Kong Christian den Siettes Historie. Kjöbenhavn, 1886. 354 p.

LABAT, JEAN BAPTISTE.

Nouveau voyage aux isles de l'Amérique. . . . A la Haye, 1724. 2 v. 4°.

The author was a cheerful, if not very accurate, Jesuit priest who visited St. Croix after its abandonment by the French in 1695 or 1696, and St. Thomas in 1700. He gives a lively description of the Danish and Brandenburg factories.

LEDRU, ANDRÉ PIERRE.

Voyage aux isles de Ténériffe, la Trinité, Saint-Thomas, Saint-Croix et Porto-Rico, exécuté par ordre du gouvernement Français depuis le 30 Septembre, 1796 jusqu'au 7 juin, 1798, contenant des observations, etc. Paris, 1810. 2 v. Folded map.

Pp. 160–188 of the German translation of 1812 contains a description of the Danish West Indies.

LEROY-BEAULIEU, PIERRE PAUL.
De la colonisation chez les peuples modernes. Paris, 1902. 2 v.
A brief account of Danish West Indian colonization (Vol. I, pp. 182–186).
MACPHERSON, DAVID.
Annals of commerce, manufactures, fisheries, and navigation. . . . London, 1805. 4 v.
This compilation, gleaned from many sources, has a number of extracts, including quotations from treaties, dealing with the Danish islands.
MARTEL, HENRI.
Étude pratique sur les colonies anciennes et modernes et sur leurs grandes compagnies commerciales. Ghent, 1898. 355 p.
Pp. 332, 335: Danish West Indies.
MARTIN, ROBERT MONTGOMERY.
History of the West Indies, comprising Jamaica, Honduras, Trinidad, . . . and the Virgin Isles. London, 1836. 2 v.
Vol. 1, pp. 288–312: Virgin Isles, especially Tortola.
MORRIS, HENRY CRITTENDEN.
The history of colonization from the earliest times to the present day. New York, 1900. 2 v.
The few pages (284–286) devoted to the Danish West Indian colonies are full of errors and misstatements. The work bears evidence of hasty compilation. A revised edition has recently appeared.
NATHANSON, M. L.
Historisk-statistisk Fremstilling af Danmarks National-og Stats-Huusholdning fra Frederick den Fjerdes Tid indtil Nutiden. Kjöbenhavn, 1844. 2d ed. revised. 1062 p.
Numerous comments on the West Indian and Guinea trade, with statistics drawn from Thaarup, and other sources; particularly valuable for period after 1765.
NIELSEN, OLUF.
Kjöbenhavns Historie og Beskrivelse. . . . Kjöbenhavn, 1871–1792. 6 v.
A reliable history of Copenhagen, based on careful study of first hand materials and giving due emphasis to the economic development of the city. The interest of Copenhagen merchants in the India trade is brought out.
D'ORBIGNY, M. ALCIDE.
Voyage dans les deux Amériques. Paris, 1854. 615 p.
A paragraph mentioning St. Thomas's position as a free port, smuggling, trade, etc. (p. 31).

PAYNE, EDWARD JOHN.
History of European colonies. London, 1877. 408 p.
PFLUG, HENRICH OVESEN.
Den Danske Pillegrim. Kbhn., 1707.
A discursive work, containing descriptions of many parts of the world. It gives an account of the dispute concerning Crab Island, in which Danes, Spaniards and English participated. Quoted in Höst, 16, 79.
PONTOPPIDAN, ERIK.
Origines Hafniensis, etc. Kjöbenhavn, 1760.
RAYNAL, GUILLAUME-THOMAS.
A philosophical and political history of the settlements and trade of the Europeans in the East and West Indies. London, 1798. 6 v.
Vol. 4, 256–265, Danish settlements in St. Thomas, St. John and Santa Cruz. Translated from the French.
RODWAY, JAMES.
The West Indies and the Spanish Main. London and New York, 1896. 371 p.
Pp. 238–240; St. Thomas, brief historical sketch.
[ROYAL SOCIETY.]
Philosophical Transactions and Collections. London, 1700–1701.
An account of the Darien expedition which touched at St. Thomas in 1698. *See also* Höst, pp. 39 *et seq.*
SCHLEGEL, JOHAN FREDERIK WILHELM.
Statistisk Beskrivelse af de fornemste europæiske Stater. I Del. Kjöbenhavn, 1793.
This work corresponds closely to that of Thaarup (*q. v.*).
SCHÜCK, RICHARD.
Brandenburg-Preussens Kolonial-Politik. . . . (1647–1721). Leipsig, 1889. 2 v.
A minute exposition of the colonial policy of the Great Elector and his immediate successors, based on an extensive study of the archival materials in Berlin, Emden, and Aurich. The main defect in the work, so far as concerns the author's treatment of the Brandenburg African Company's experience at St. Thomas, is due to his failure to consult the Danish West India and Guinea Company's archives in Copenhagen.
SMITH, ADAM.
An inquiry into the nature and cause of the wealth of nations. Oxford, 1880. 2 v. (2nd ed., by J. E. T. Rogers.)
Pp. 149–150: the Danish West Indian colonies are cited to show the evils of government by an exclusive company.

SOUTHEY, CAPT. THOMAS.

Chronological history of the West Indies. London, 1827. 3 v.

A compilation from many works of many sorts, quite regardless of their reliability. The direct quotations from treaties and other primary documents are of value.

STEENSTRUP, JOHANNES, and others.

Danmarks Riges Historie. Kjöbenhavn [1897–1907]. 6 v. and index.

This coöperative history of Denmark is an authoritative summary by modern Danish scholars, each of whom is a specialist in his particular field. Vol. IV (1588–1699) is by Prof. J. A. Fridericia, and Vol. V by Prof. Edvard Holm. The latter has paid considerable attention to the East and West India companies and has not hesitated to make use of their records in his study.

THAARUP, FREDERICK.

Veiledning til det Danske Monarkies Statistik. Kjöbenhavn, 1794. 2d ed. 767 p.

This work appeared in a number of new editions during the next quarter century. It presents a considerable body of bibliographical, statistical, and descriptive material (pp. 420–443).

WINTERBOTHAM, W.

An historical, geographical, commercial and philosophical view of the United States of America, and of the European settlements in America and the West Indies. New York, 1812. (1st Am. ed.) 4 v.

Vol. IV, pp. 329–330: Danish West Indies.

MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

(Unpublished)

"CARTE *des königl. Dänischen Westindische* EILANDES *St. Thomas unter den* [ ] *Grad.* [ ] *Minut. nordlicher Breite belegen.*" Size: 28 x 48 cm.

This undated manuscript map of St. Thomas appears on the same sheet with the map of St. Croix listed below. It was probably made between 1715 and 1730. It is the earliest known map showing St. Thomas under Danish possession, and is here reproduced for the first time. (Royal Library, Copenhagen.)

"CARTE DE L'ISLE DE SAINTE CROIX DANOISE *située sous le 18me m. de Lat. Septen.*" Size: 28 x 48 cm.

This map, the names on which are written in the same hand as in the preceding map, has in its upper left-hand corner the following legend: "Maison de Monsieur du Bois dernier Vice

Gouverneur de l'isle pour sa Majes. très Chrétienne l'an 1734." From this, it would appear that the island was occupied when the Danes came over to take it in full possession in January, 1735. As there is no evidence indicating occupation, however, it is possible that the map is misdated.

"Kort *over* Eylandet St. Croix *udi* America *Saaledes som det ved en acurat udmaaling er befunden med Qvarterernes Navne og enhver Plantagies Nummer . . . tegnet af I. M. Beck.*" Size: 47 x 72.5 cm.

This map was engraved in 1754 and dedicated to Adam Gotlob Moltke. On a copy in the Royal Library, on which is written "Saaledes befunden i July Maaned 1766," is to be found filled in ink the names of all the plantation owners and the locations of the sugar mills. The plans of the towns "Christianstæd" and "Fredericksstæd" are inserted in the engraving. (Royal Library.)

"Af Teigning *ofr. St. Croussis Bye.*"

This crude, undated representation of "St. Croix's town" was apparently made shortly after the occupation of the island, and intended to show the appearance of Christiansted. (State Archives.)

"*Forestilling af Wærfet paa Øen St. Croix i Westindien . . . forfærdiget af H. G. Beenfeldt 1815.*"

Although made long after the Company's dissolution, the lively scene on the Christiansted waterfront at St. Croix is fairly typical of the eighteenth century on that island. The sailing ships riding at anchor in the harbor, the fort, the batteries, and the provision houses, the red-coated soldiers and the negroes with their burdens, the white aristocrats in their carriages or on horseback, the sugar casks piled up on the square, even the ubiquitous goat and the humble mule,—all are typical of St. Croix in its palmy days. Vessels flying the flag of the United States may be seen in the harbor. (State Archives.)

Early Printed Maps

(Eighteenth Century)

"Die Insel Sanct Thomas *mit den mehresten Plantagen 1767.*"

"Die Insel Sainte Croix *mit den Namen der Plantagen die bestændig sind . . . 1767.*"

These two maps, engraved by Paul Küffner of Nuremberg, are to be found in Oldendorp's *Geschichte der Mission* (listed among the printed works above). Both show locations of plantations and mills.

Oxholm, Peter Lotharius. *Charte over den Danske Öe St. Croix i America forfaerdiget i Aaret 1794 og udgivet i Aaret 1799. . . .* Size: 67 x 174 cm.

Oxholm's map (engraved by G. N. Angelo, Copenhagen) was reproduced by Laurie and Whittle of London in 1804. The legend on the English map is misleading in that it states that the map is made "From an actual survey made in 1794–1799." Another edition of the Oxholm map was published by the Hydrographical office in London on March 1, 1831.

Oxholm, P. L. *Charte over den Danske Öe St. Jan i America Optaget i Aaret 1780, og Udgivet i Aaret 1800. . . .* Size: 60 x 98.5 cm.

Maps Printed Since 1800

Hornbeck, H. B. *St. Thomas Dansk Americansk Ö optaget i 1835–39 ved Barometer og Vinkel Maaling . . . tegnet i 1845 af J. Chr. Petersen Tegner ved Sökaart Archivet.*

This map is reproduced in J. P. Knox, Historical account of St. Thomas.

"De danske Atlanterhavsöer" (publ.). *Kort over Dansk Vestindien.*

Maps of all three islands are printed in *Afsnit IV, Dansk Vestindien* (Kjöbenhavn, 1908).

Börgesen, F.

Map of the Danish West Indian Islands.

Reproduced in Botanisk Tidsskrift. Bd. 29. The reefs and depths of surrounding waters are indicated.

Eggers, H. F. A. (Baron). "Vegetationskort over St. Croix," in *Videnskabelige Meddelelser fra Naturhistorisk Forening i Kjöbenhavn for Aaret 1876.*

A map showing the distribution of vegetation on St. Croix.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

GOVERNORS IN THE WEST INDIES AND IN GUINEA

(1) GOVERNORS IN THE WEST INDIES FROM THE BEGINNING, IN THE YEAR 1671 [1]

In the West Indies, the first governor who took possession of the island of St. Thomas on May 25, 1672, was

JÖRGEN IVERSEN, who was succeeded by

NICOLAI ESMIT, who received his appointment on September 10, 1679, and was deposed by

ADOLPH ESMIT, his brother, who was to have been relieved by Jörgen Iversen, who again started out [for the West Indies] in November, 1682, on the ship *Hafmanden* (*Merman*), where he was killed by mutineers, whereupon the said Adolph Esmit was supplanted by

GABRIEL MILAN, who was appointed in 1684; but because of bad conduct, Gabriel Milan and Adolph Esmit were sent home as prisoners by Commissioner Michel Michelsen, and [they] arrived here in October, 1686, and meantime

CHRISTOPHER HEINS was vice governor until March, 1688, when

ADOLPH ESMIT again arrived in St. Thomas and took command, having gone thither in the ship *Maria* [under the command of] vice admiral Hoppe, but vice admiral Hoppe took him home a prisoner and arrived here in October, 1688, so that

CHRISTOPHER HEINS again became vice governor until 1690 [when] he died and was succeeded by

JOHAN LORENSEN.[2] In that year the lesseeship [of St. Thomas] began under Jörgen Thormöhlen, who installed

FRANS DE LA VIGNE as governor of St. Thomas, but Johan Lorentz remained in the meanwhile as vice governor and looked out for the Company's interests, also made a journey home, during the period of the lease, and went out again [to

[1] From P. Mariager, *Historisk Efterretning* . . . pp. 213 *et seq.* The spelling of proper names employed by Mariager is followed here. This work is dated 1753, hence was compiled nearly two years before the Company's dissolution. The translation is avowedly literal.

[2] Rendered as John Lorentz in text.

St. Thomas], and remained as vice governor until February 19, 1702, when he died and was succeeded by

Claus Hansen, who was advanced on the spot [to governor] *ad interim*, and was confirmed [by the directors remaining in office] until his death, February 8, 1706, when

Jochum von Holten succeeded him [and remained in office] until December 21, 1708, when he died. His place was taken by the *interim* commandant

Diderich Mogensen, who was relieved in 1710 by

Michel Crone, who died August 8, 1716, and was succeeded by

Erich Bredal, in whose time the island of St. John was occupied. He was succeeded in April, 1724, by

Friderich Moth [3] who was succeeded late in May, 1727, by

Hendrich Suhm, "Commandeur Capitain" who came from Fort Christiansborg in Guinea, and until February 21, 1733, he remained on St. Thomas when he was relieved by

Phillip Gardelin in whose time, namely in the above year, 1733, the rebellion of negroes on St. John began. Later, on February 21, 1736, his place was taken by

Friderich Moth, who became governor of the island of St. Croix on June 12, 1734, which island was occupied by him in that same year, and [who] was, on February 21, 1736, made governor general of all the Company's three islands, St. Thomas, St. John and St. Croix, [remaining] until April 13, 1744, when he was succeeded by

Christian Schweder, who was commissioned as commandant of the fort (*Castellet*) and Christiansfort on St. Thomas and St. John, and head [4] of the privy council in matters affecting all three islands; and he was relieved on April 25, 1747, by

Christian Suhm, who was installed as vice commandant and governor over St. Thomas and St. John, and head of the privy council of St. Croix, but later in the same year he was exempted from [his] St. Croix duties, since a governor and privy council have been placed over St. Croix alone, so that he is still vice commandant and governor of the islands St. Thomas and St. John in the West Indies.

On St. Croix, on the other hand, there have been since the beginning of the year 1734:

Friderich Moth, and during his absence

Gregers Hög Nissen was named on February 24, 1736, as

[3] Otto Jacob Thambsen served as governor for a few months after Bredal. See above, p. 184.

[4] "*Förste Stemme.*"

"chief" *ad interim*[5] and judge on the said [island of] St. Croix, [where he continued] until April 16, 1744, when he was replaced by

Paul Lindemark, who was likewise "chief" *ad interim*, and treasurer on St. Croix in Commandant Schweder's absence. He continued until May 15, 1747, when his place was taken by

Jens Hansen, who was commissioned as governor of St. Croix in the same year, [in which position he remained] until December, 1751, when he was relieved by

Peder Clausen, who is still governor on the said island of St. Croix.

(2) governors in guinea from the year 1650[6]

So far as is known from the account of H[artwig] Meyer[7] to the Company, hereinbefore referred to,

Henning Abrecht appears in the year 1650 to have established a "lodge" on the Guinea coast near Ac[c]ra, and to have resided 18 [Danish?] miles from that place at the Danish citadel,[8] Friderichsberg, which lodge was, in 1659, made into a small fort at which there was placed in charge

Christian Cornelisen as factor, and [who] had it changed to a fortress, which is now Christiansborg, after which

Peter Valck is said to have been in command of the fort, Fredericksberg, but, because of his bad conduct, held as a slave by the black king; and

Peter Bolt the then factor, did in the year 1679 in traitorous fashion sell the fort Christiansborg to the Portuguese nation, thereafter fleeing from the coast of Guinea.

Magnus Pranger arrived at Fort Friderichsberg in Guinea, from Copenhagen, in February, 1681, bringing with him his majesty's orders to the then provisional commander, Peter Vitth and commissioner Johan Ulrich, as well as [to] all those who were in authority, to the effect that they were to seize the forts Fridericksberg and Christiansborg together with the lodges in Guinea, [and they] bestirred themselves to retake the said fort, Christiansborg, from the Portuguese, but in vain; meantime Magnus Pranger died in that same year, 1681, and was succeeded by

[5] As *Interims Cheff* Nissen was to officiate in Governor Moth's place during the latter's absence.

[6] P. Mariager, *Historisk Efterretning*. . . . The peculiar form of these lists has made a rather literal translation seem desirable.

[7] *Ibid.* pp. 75 *et seq.* *Cf.* above, p. 21.

[8] *Hoved Castell.*

Conrad Busch, chief factor, who remained but 10 days at the helm of the government of Fort Friderichsberg, when, because of his bad conduct, he was replaced by

Hans Lücke, lieutenant at said fort, Friderichsberg, [and] who, after the Portuguese had, in 1682, acting on royal orders, abandoned it, took possession of Fort Christiansborg in the Company's name, and placed in charge there

Peter Hofman, factor, who had come out from Glückstad to Guinea; and Fort Friderichsberg was sold by the above Hans Lücke and Peter Hofman to the English commandant at Cape Cors, who took it into possession in the year 1685, whereupon Lücke, together with Hofman and Lorens Lassen came to Christiansborg. Thereafter Lyke (Lücke) died and Hofman [9] and Lassen returned to Denmark so that

Nicolai Fensman in the year 1688 became governor at the fort of Christiansborg after which

Jörgen Meyer, [who had been appointed] commander [in] 1691, for and by Nicolai Jansen Arf[f], took possession of Fort Christiansborg, and in 1692, Nicolai Fensman again came out [to Guinea] in Nicolai Jansen Arf[f]'s service, but returned, and thereafter

Harding Peterson was made governor. In the same year, 1693, because of said Harding Petersen's careless supervision, the fort was taken by the blacks. But when two of Nicolai Jansen Arf[f]'s ships came out, the merchants who accompanied them, Hartwig Meyer and Johan Trane, concluded a treaty by which Fort Christiansborg was delivered back to them, whereupon

Thomas Jacobsen was installed as governor; and when Nicolai Jansen Arff abandoned the trade,

Erich Olsen Lygaard was in the year 1698 placed as governor of said Christiansborg in the name of the Company, as it had taken up the Guinea trade; and he was relieved by

Johan Trane, who left here in August, 1698, and was succeeded by

Hartvig Meyer, who left here in August, 1702 [and remained there] until April, 1704, when he died and was succeeded *ad interim* by

Peder Sverdrup who likewise died, in May, 1705, when he was succeeded by

Peder Pedersen. Meantime, in order to release Hartvig Meyer, there was sent out from here once more

Erich Olsen Lygaard, who left Copenhagen in December, 1704, [and] who died, and was succeeded by

[9] *Derefter döde Lyke og Hofman og Lassen repatrierede saa at . . .*

Frans Boye, who in the year 1711 departed over Holland or England to relieve the said Lygaard; and he was in turn relieved in 1717 by

Knud Rost, who died and was succeeded by

David Herrn, who left in the capacity of factor on January 22, 1723, [and] into whose place advanced, *ad interim*

Christian Synderman, who was relieved in April, 1724, by

Hendrich Suhm, "Commandeur Capitain," who was sent to St. Thomas and sailed thither March 4, 1727,

Frederich Pahl advancing into his place, and shortly thereafter dying. The latter was followed *ad interim* by

Andreas Willumsen, who was succeeded on December 24, 1728, by

Andreas Pedersen Waeröe, who was to have been relieved by "Cammer Raad" Andreas Jörgensen, who left in June, 1733, but [who] died en route, so that he [Waeröe] remained until August 12, 1735, when his place was taken by

Severin Schiellerop, councilor of chancery,[10] who died June 15, 1736, and was succeeded *ad interim* by

Enevold Nielsen Borris, who died June 20, 1740, and was succeeded *ad interim* by

Peter Nicolai Jörgensen, who, on May 25, 1743, gave up his position to

Christian Glob Dorph who was relieved by

Jörgen Billsen on February 3, 1744, and when, on March 11, 1745, he died, he was succeeded *ad interim* by

Thomas Broek, who died on the 23rd [of March, and] on whose place there stepped *ad interim*

Johan Wilder, who died April 23, 1745, and likewise was succeeded *ad interim* by

August Friderich Hackenburg, whose place was taken in June 21, 1746, by

Joost Platfus, who was relieved on March 6, 1751, by

Magnus Christopher Lützow, Major, who arrived at the fort of Christiansborg on March 6, 1751, and passed away on the 8th of the same month, when he was succeeded *ad interim* by

Magnus Hachsen, who died July 21, 1752, and was followed *ad interim* by

Carl Engman, who is now governor *ad interim* of Fort Christiansborg in Guinea.

[10] *Cancellie Raad.*

APPENDIX B

DIRECTORS AND BOARD OF SHAREHOLDERS IN COPENHAGEN

DIRECTORS OF THE COMPANY [1]

Name	*Appointed*	*Term closed*
Jens Juel	Mar. 11, 1671	1681
Peder Pedersen Lerke	" "	Mar. (?) 1680
Hans Nansen	" "	" "
Herman Meyer [2]	Apr. 7, 1680	July 1, 1681
Peder Bladt	" "	" "
Mauritz van der Thy [3]	" "	" "
Claus Sohn	" "	" "
Herman(?) Meyer	July 1, 1681	1682
Hans Nansen	" "	"
Edvard Holst	" "	
Jens Juel	1682	1700
Albert Gyldensparre [4]	"	1697 (?)
Jörgen Ehlers [5]	1688	1697 (?)
Iver Hoppe	"	1697 (?)
Jens Juel	1697	
Mathias Moth	[before 1697]	
Kristian Braem [6]	1697	
Jochum F. Rohde	"	
Johan Gotfried Becker	"	
Jacob Lerke	"	
Kristian Schupp	May 28, 1700	
Karl Ahlefeldt	May 7, 1703	
Laurens de Boysset	Sept. 12, 1712	
Frederik Rostgaard	" "	
Kristen Berregaard	Jan. 11, 1723	
Ferdinand Anthon	" "	
Severin Junge	Dec. 4, 1727	

[1] Modern Danish usage has been followed as far as possible in the spelling of the proper names here listed. Many of the names are of men prominent in Danish-Norwegian history, whose biographies may be found in *Dansk Biografisk Lexikon*, edited by C. F. Bricka.

[2] Meyer and his three colleagues were elected *ad interim*.

[3] Or *Morits v. de Thee*.

[4] Albert Schumacher, a brother of Griffenfeld.

[5] Or *Elers*.

[6] Braem, Rohde, Becker and Lerke were merely "acting directors."

Name	*Appointed*	*Term closed*
Hans Jörgen Soelberg	Dec. 4, 1727	
Abraham Klöcker	" "	
Gregorius Klauman	June 16, 1730	
Ferdinand Anthon (Laurwigen)	1732	Sept. 12, 1732
Severin [de] Junge [7]	"	
Kristen Berregaard	"	
Hans J. Soelberg	"	
Gregorius Klauman	"	
Otto Blome, chairman	Sept. 26, 1733	
Severin [de] Junge	" "	
Thomas Bartholin	" "	
Frederik Holmsted	" "	
F[rederik] Seckman	" "	
H. J. Soelberg	" "	
Gregorius Klauman	" "	
Ernst Ulrick Dose	Apr. 14, 1735	
Lorens Kreyer [8]	" "	
Karl Adolf von Plessen	Sept. 10, 1735	
Adolf Andreas von der Lühe	Nov. 17, 1736	
Peter Lemvig	Dec. 28, 1737	
Jacob Kling	" "	
Herman L. Klöcker	May 9, 1741	
Johan Frederik Wewer	Mar. 18, 1747	
Joost von Hemert	" "	
Andreas Biörn	" "	
[Gotthilf] Just Fabritius [9]	" "	
Adam Gotlob Moltke [10]	Mar. 3, 1750	
Johannes Valeur [11]	Sept. 14, 1751	

DIRECTORS OF THE SUGAR REFINERY [12]

F. Seckman	1729	1734
G. Klauman	"	"
H. J. Soelberg	"	"
F. Holmsted	1735	Dec. 28, 1737
G. Klauman	" "	"

[7] Junge received his patent of nobility in 1731.

[8] Or *Laurents Kreyer.*

[9] Resigned very soon after his appointment.

[10] *Præses* or chairman.

[11] When Mariager wrote (1753), the directors were Moltke, Klöcker, Wewer, Hemert, and Valeur.

[12] The management of the refinery was taken over by all the directors of the Company on March 9, 1750.

Name	*Appointed*	*Term closed*
F. Holmsted	1737	Mar. 3, 1750
G. Klauman	"	" "
P. Lemvig	"	" "

BOARD OF SHAREHOLDERS OF THE COMPANY

(*Hovedparticipanter*)

Kort Adeler	Mar. 11, 1671	1679
Frederik Poggenberg	" "	"
Niels Juel	Sept. 1679	July 1, 1681
Claus Sohn	" "	" "
[Mikkel] Wibe	July 1, 1681	
Meyer	" "	
Gregorius Fleischer	" "	
Jens Tolder (Rosenheim)	Dec. "	
[Jörgen] Ehlers [13]	" "	
Abraham Wust	" "	
Wilhelm Mule [14]	1697	
Paul Winding	"	
Peder Lemvig	"	
Paul Eggers	"	
Laurens de Boyssett	Apr. 29, 1698	Sept. 12, 1712
Vincens Lerke	June 26, 1703	
Kasper G. von Moltke	May, 1704	
Kristen Berregaard	May 1, 1713	Jan. 11, 1723
Severin Junge	" "	Dec. 4, 1727
Olaus Judicher	Jan. 11, 1723	
Hans J. Soelberg	" "	Dec. 4, 1727
Abraham Klöcker	" "	" "
Gregorius Klauman [15]	Mar. 13, 1728	June 16, 1730
[Frederik] Seckman	" "	
Urban Bruun	" "	
Frederik Holmsted [16]	Apr. 7, 1728	
K. A. von Plessen	Sept. 26, 1733	
Ernst Ulrik Dose	" "	April, 1735
Laurents Kreyer	" "	" "
Peter Lemvig	" "	Dec., 1737
Herman Lengerken Klöcker	" " [4]	May, 1741
Adolf Andreas v. d. Lühe	Apr. 14, 1735	Nov., 1736

[13] Or *Elers.*

[14] Or *Muhle.*

[15] The sugar refinery was united with the Company and managed by a committee of the directors. Soelberg and Klauman were elected on October 7.

[16] Reappointed in 1732.

Name	*Appointed*	*Term closed*
Jacob Kling	Apr. 14, 1735	Dec., 1737
Hans Gram	Nov. 17, 1736	
Johannes Valeur	Dec. 28, 1737	Sept. 14, 1751
Iver Jentofft	" "	
Frans Fæddesen	" "	
Kristian Lucas Klauman	Mar. 9, 1741	
[Kristian] Stockfleth	Mar. 3, 1750	
Jesper Richardt	" "	
Oluf Blach	" "	
Peter Boertman	Feb. 24, 1751	
Adam Christian Oelgod	" "	
Lyder Schilderop [17]	Sept. 14, 1751	

[17] At the time that Mariager wrote (1753) the board of shareholders consisted of Blach, Boertman, Oelgod, and Schilderop.

APPENDIX C

THE FIRST CHARTER OF THE DANISH WEST INDIA COMPANY [1]

On March 11, 1671, by a charter most graciously granted by his royal Majesty, King Christian the Fifth, the Company was established for the benefit of commerce and for the general welfare which thereon depends. . . .

In the said . . . charter the Company is graciously permitted to have, use, enjoy and retain in its possession the island of St. Thomas in the Caribbees, and other islands in the vicinity or on the mainland in America, with the following privileges, namely:

(1) To be permitted in the name of his Majesty to form alliance with either governments in the West Indies;

To be allowed in case of violence or attack to employ means adequate for defense and offense;

But in case European lords, potentates, or states cause trouble to the Company, it must first refer the matter to the king, although if the others should begin the use of violence, the Company must defend itself.

If it shall be considered necessary, his Majesty will not alone furnish the Company with the needed credentials but will also send to all foreign potentates such communications as the Company's interests may require.

(2) The Company may build such forts, lodges and offices as they may deem necessary [upon St. Thomas], and also upon such islands and lands as are uninhabited and belong to no other power, and if such possession is effected by the Company, the lands must belong to the Company.

His Majesty will appoint and ordain commandants and governors suitable for the Company's service, after considering the recommendation of the Company, and will, moreover, especially order them to labor for the Company's best interests; nor shall they be paid higher salaries than the condition of the Company's finances will justify.

[1] Translated from P. Mariager, *Historiske Efterretninger*, pp. 2 *et seq.* The original, with which this has been compared, is to be found in *Registrant over Vestindiske Sager, 1671–1699.* See also C. P. Rothe's *Rescripter for Norge, Island . . . og de Indiske Besiddelser . . .* 2 Bd. Mariager's paragraphing has been retained.

(3) The commandants and others in the Company's employ must not do any trading except on the Company's account.[2]

(4) During the first three years, his Majesty will loan the Company a ship, which will be fitted out with all necessities, and for the use of which the Company will pay nothing during the first year, on condition that the Company shall give [to the king] one-half of all woods, pock-wood or other kinds, which they carry, and likewise one-half of such quantity of salt as they may secure there. But if they carry other goods, then they must pay 30 *rdl.* in freight for each 4,000 lbs.[3]

But for the succeeding years, they are to give 40 *rdl.* per *Læst* or 4000 lbs. although they are not to pay for woods and the like which are used as ballast, nor to pay freight on more than is delivered here on their return.

And in order that they may in the course of time the more easily come to own their own ships, the Company shall be permitted, as soon as their means will allow it, to furnish themselves a flute ship for securing salt from Spain, in which [trade] they may enjoy the same privileges as the largest mounted ships sailing to Spain, although such ships be not built especially with a view to defence.

His Majesty will also loan the Company one of his small yachts, which they may retain there in the islands for three years, and if it cannot be sent hither then, the Company shall not be held liable to pay.

Similarly, his Majesty will loan to the Company sailors to go with the Company's ships, on condition that the Company pay the men as high wages as they have enjoyed in the king's service, and furnish them with the needed provisions and board so long as they are on board ship.

And the Company's ships may fly his Majesty's flag, and are also to be provided with the proper passports.

(5) Those ministers of the gospel who return from thence and have comported themselves well will be appointed by his Majesty to such places as may be vacant, and are to be supported during the interval by the funds of the marine department.

(6) His Majesty's seamen who are placed in the service of the Company are to be subject to the directors' orders so long as the journey lasts, and the latter are to include them in their oath of allegiance.

[2] They were also forbidden to enter into any war or to take an offensive action against either Europeans or Indians, except on the advice and with the consent of the directors, and under no circumstances were they to wage war against a European power without the royal consent. *Cf.* C. P. Rothe, *Rescripter.*

[3] One *Læst* contained four thousand Danish pounds.

(7) So long as the Company exists, none other than it, neither his Majesty's own subjects nor foreigners, shall receive any passports or permission to trade with the West Indies in any fashion whatsoever, upon penalty of confiscation of ship and goods; and such ships as the Company is able to seize, either by its own ships or freight vessels, it may retain, except the tenth part, which share of all prizes goes to his Majesty's Admiral of the Realm.[4]

(8) The Company's ships or property, either in general or in particular, is not to be subject to seizure or to any other use whatever without the Company's consent, nor shall any other obstacle be placed in its way whether in time of peace or in time of war, but trade shall always be permitted to run its free and undisturbed course.

(9) Everything needed for the equipment, cargo and fitting out of the Company's ships shall be exempt from duty, but all goods brought in from the [West] Indies shall be carefully listed, . . . those exported to foreign lands, shall be subject to a duty of one per cent. and those remaining within the realm, to two and one-half per cent., for which account must be rendered at the close of each year.

(10) The Company is also permitted to have its own weights and measures, and to use these in all cases although they must conform to those weights and measures which are in use here in Copenhagen.

(11) And since the said Company is an entirely new enterprise, and no one has yet been placed in charge of it, and since it is highly necessary that persons be appointed at once to take charge of the collecting of capital and of securing the necessary goods [for the venture] [at the proper time], these persons are hereby chosen and authorized to act as directors: Jens Juul[5] chancery councilor and vice president of the Board of Trade, Peter Pedersen Lerche, justice in the supreme court and a member of the Board of Trade, and Hans Nansen,[6] likewise a member of the Board of Trade. To these three shall be added three of the Company's shareholders, by a majority vote, as soon as a sufficient number of shareholders have joined the Company. His Majesty has also . . . granted the shareholders the right to fill vacancies on the board of directors, provided the places are filled from among the stockholders who have invested not

[4] *Rigsadmiral.*

[5] Juel.

[6] Rendered incorrectly as Hansen in C. P. Rothe's *Rescripter.*

less than 2,000 *sldl.* in the Company,—all in accordance with the proposals of the *Règlement* drawn up by the Board of Trade.

(12) The said Company is also to be allowed to have its own court, so that the directors may try and render judgment in all disputes and cases concerning themselves and their employees, which arise out of the [West] Indian trade; from which forum there shall be no appeal, except to the supreme court.

(13) And all artisans, laborers and seamen who come from foreign places to enter the Company's service, shall enjoy the same treatment that his Majesty's subjects enjoy, and they as well as their surviving wives and children, shall be exempt from the payment of sixths and tenths when they receive a furlough from the Company and proceed out of the kingdom. . . .

(14) And inasmuch as the Company has need of men to build and defend the places and lodges which they need for their security, as well as for the peopling of the colonies and the cultivation and settling of the land, it is permitted to take two enlisted men from each company from among the strong, industrious men who are married and know some trade, and also as many as may be needed of those who have been condemned to prison or put in irons, for use on plantations or elsewhere; and of women, as many as may be desired from among those whose unseemly lives have brought them into prison or a house of correction.[7]

(15) The Company is also permitted, by royal favor, to have as much space as they may need for meetings, the safe-keeping of moneys, and for offices, in the upper part of the stock exchange, while for pack houses and magazine it is to have the vaults and space formerly occupied by the salt company, which places shall be assigned them by the Board of Trade.

(16) It is permitted, moreover, that if the Glückstadt African Company is unable to give satisfactory assurances of its ability to continue its career on the lines already planned, the West India Company shall be allowed to take up said Company's work with the same privileges and exemptions as the Glückstadt company now has, although in such a case they shall pay said company for all its entire stock of pieces, guns, and ammunition, and also permit it to remove such goods as it may have on hand, and to collect its outstanding debts there, unless some other arrangement is made between the two companies.

But inasmuch as the forts revert *Ex direlicto* to his Majesty,

[7] *Spindehuset eller andetsteds.*

he will hand them over to the Company's possession and retention without any dues.

Finally, the privilege of using his Majesty's seal in such cases as the advancement of commerce seems to require is by especial royal favor and grace granted to those servants of the Company in the [West] Indies who have charge of its business.

Which most gracious charter is dated [at] Copenhagen, March 11, A[nn]o 1671.

APPENDIX D

CHARTER OF 1697 FOR THE WEST INDIA AND GUINEA COMPANY [1]

C[hristian] 5 to whomsoever this may come, greeting: Inasmuch as we have most graciously recommended the directors of our West India Company to take up the Guinea trade, in order the better to facilitate the said commerce, we have most graciously furnished our West India and Guinea Company with this our charter.

1

The Company is to continue in possession of the island of St. Thomas in the West Indies, likewise Crab island, St. John, *item* the fortress Christiansborg in Guinea, together with such lands and forts as they might hereafter secure possession of, and is alone to be permitted to trade therewith, and is, without payment of dues to us, to enjoy any and all profit which might therefrom ensue.

2

The Company may take and retain in full possession all those islands which it owns and which are still uninhabited, such as Crab Island, St. John, and the like, as well as all those places on the mainland of Africa and America which are not already taken possession of by other European nations, and [it may] permit forts and lodges to be built thereon; and any profit that may result from such occupation shall likewise be the Company's to enjoy and to retain, without any dues, let or hindrance.

3

The Company may enter into such contracts and alliances with governments in Africa and America as seem best for the furtherance of commerce, and when it is necessary, we shall assist it with our credentials and recommendations, but it must not enter into negotiations with European potentates or states without previously securing our consent; for, when the Company requests it, we shall graciously take it [i. e., such negotiations] up, and labor for the welfare of the Company.

[1] Translated from *Registrant over Vestindiske Sager, 1671–1699* (*Rigsarkiv*).

4

No one, whether he be a subject or a foreigner, excepting the Company alone, may hereafter enjoy the use of our . . . passports,[2] or be permitted to sail to Africa or America, and still less to trade with the Company's lands, forts or lodges, but if some of our subjects should nevertheless venture to trade with the places and lands indicated, without the Company's permission, they shall be liable, whenever they may be found, to lose ship and cargo and whatever they may have with them, which shall all fall to the Company, without any dues to us.

5

All goods of whatever kind, without exception, which the Company may ship from our lands and dominions to Africa and America, as well as all sorts of goods which the Company may order and import from foreign places or from our own lands for the furtherance of trade [or for] the fitting out and provisioning of ships, shall be entirely free and exempt from customs duties, food taxes, excise, and all other dues, by whatever name they might be known, which shall include those which are already forbidden, as well as those which may hereafter be forbidden. So also all ships and vessels which the Company now owns or hereafter may own shall be exempt from all harbor and tonnage dues as well as from all other burdens aforementioned. But those goods which the Company ships from Africa or America to Denmark (excepting gold, which shall be exempt from customs dues or any other kind whatsoever) shall be subject to the following tariffs: one per cent. on such goods as are shipped to foreign states (?) [*fremmede ster*], and two and one-half per cent. on goods consumed in our realms and lands.

6

The Company's ships and effects must not be liable to seizure, except in such cases where someone has advanced an appreciable sum of money for the Company's benefit in return for the notes of the directors and in such cases, the person who has in his possession the directors' notes may, in case of default of payment, have the directors summoned before our supreme court and may there secure judgment against them, after which judgment, he may seize any of the Company's effects, and secure his payments out of those.

[2] *Söe passer.*

7

And in order that the trade of the Company may the better be continued and directed, we have seen fit to permit and to order that the shareholders may select from among themselves, by a majority vote, six men, or a greater number if need be, who are to serve as directors, of which six or more, one-third shall be of our ministers or servants, and the other two-thirds reputable merchants from this city, although no one may be selected to act as director unless he has invested, at the very least, 1,000 rixdollars in the Company; which directors shall have full power and authority to dispose of all the Company's means and effects, in Europe as well as in Africa and America, and to make all needful arrangements upon the Company's behalf; and when any of the directors die, others shall be selected in the aforesaid manner.

8

The said directors are herewith authorized to appoint and to dismiss all employees of the Company who serve on land or sea, whether in Europe, Africa, or America, and to issue such instructions to them as they may deem needful for the Company's interests; which employees shall be duly bound to carry out the orders of the directors on pain of punishment according to the gravity of the case. But such as are chosen by the directors, acting for the Company, as governors and commandants of the forts in Africa or in America, must be furnished with our . . . confirmation of their office, which shall in due course be granted upon the application of the directors.

9

The Company is also to be permitted to have its own court, so that the directors may either themselves try all cases and decide all difficulties concerning the Company's employees (so long as they are actually in the Company's service and have not rendered proper account of their stewardship), or [they may] name two or more shareholders, who may do this work on the Company's behalf; and such judgments shall not be appealed from, unless someone's honor or life is involved; for in such cases, and such only, shall it be permitted to the condemned to come before the supreme court in a new trial.

10

Likewise the Company is also to be permitted to have its own weights and measures, and to use these in all cases, although

they must conform to those weights and measures which we have ordained shall be used throughout our realms and lands.

11

The Company's own artisans, as well as the master here in the city, are to be permitted without let or hindrance to carry through all that the directors have asked them to do for the furtherance of the Company's trade, and to do this in such manner as the directors may deem that the best interests of the Company demand.

12

The Company is permitted to use unstamped paper in all its departments of business, which shall be accepted in all places and in every court at just as high a [legal] value as though it were stamped.

13

The directors are to be allowed to pay such a rate of interest on moneys which they may have borrowed for the Company's use and for the promotion of its trade as they can agree upon with those concerned, and those notes which the directors thus issue on the Company's behalf are in all ways to be as valid as though all the shareholders had signed them, and they are to be accepted as letters of exchange.

14

The directors may themselves select God-fearing decent and learned persons as ministers, who shall teach the pure Lutheran doctrine on the islands and in the forts of the Company in Africa and America as well as on its ships, and who shall serve the people in matters affecting their souls' welfare. Whenever they have been named and called by the directors, we shall confirm them in their office, and if they show themselves to be well instructed and of proper behavior, we shall in due time, on the application of the directors, give them preference to others in the matter of securing positions as ministers in these, our realms and lands.

15

We do also herewith grant to those servants of the Company who do business for it in the [West] Indies permission to use our seal in cases involving the general welfare and the furtherance of commerce. *Forbydendes, etc.*

Copenhagen, September 28, [16]97.

APPENDIX E

LETTER OF CHARITÉ ESMIT TO ADOLPH ESMIT [1]

My dearest!

We thank God for the good news regarding your safe arrival in Barbados; though nine weeks old, it was very welcome to everybody. I had heard from various sources about town that letters had arrived. Madame Hoppe had kept hold of her letters three days before she had allowed me to see them. I hope all my letters have arrived, and that you will answer them before the supreme court begins its session and calls upon me for them.[2] Last week Milan had the smith, Anna, Karen and the negro Sent called up before the magistrate and had two hundred questions put to them. We had no one there; Munch is out of town on orders from the king, T., our good friend, is on Fünen, Mickelsen and Captain Meyer have been there [at the magistrate's?]. Milan has managed it so that Sent has taken the sacrament at the French ambassador's.

Your brother [3] will appeal; he has "taken orders" from Sidenborg, which has cost half a hundred rixdollars, and is to cost me an equal sum, but whence I shall get it I do not know. I am in great hopes that you will send me some [money] but I fear that you will not be able to.

May God bless you on your mission, otherwise your reputation here is gone. People here are all awaiting eventualities eagerly; I cannot write all that they say. Be sure that you

[1] *Breve og Dokumenter, 1683–1689* (*Rigsarkiv*). This letter, according to a statement signed by C. Heins, H. Irgens, J. Delicaet, and J. Lorentz, arrived in St. Thomas after Adolph Esmit's enforced return in company with vice admiral Hoppe. It had come *viâ* France and a Brandenburg bark had brought it from St. Eustatius. The letter was written in English, Madame Esmit's native tongue, but only the Danish translation is to be found in the Company's archives.

The paragraphing is that of the translator.

[2] *Jeg forhaaber at i alle mine Brefve har bekommet, i ville snart sende mig Svar derpaa förend dend Höyeste Rætt Kommer og bestille dem til mig som jeg Eder hafver beedet.*

[3] Nicholas Esmit. See above, p. 46, *et seq.* The Sidenborg referred to cannot be Jacob Sidenborg, since the latter died March 31, 1685, after having been secretary to, and a member of, the Board of Trade.

don't forget to write to Luxdorph,[4] Harbo,[5] and Baron Juell; [6] you must also write to Moth,[7] Mule [8] and to those whom you wish to retain as your friends. They are all expecting it. Do not forget the directors, for we are under their thumbs.

There are no news from the *Red Cock* and the schooner.[9] I have had the matter herewith enclosed with me for six days, but I don't think that it amounts to much. He complains of lack of money, and has told me that you were to send him five to six hundred dollars on account.[10] I find that the account appears to be quite large. I hope that it will please God to bless you to the end that we may get away from this people. I believe in my good God, who has never during my life left me in need, and if he wills to spare my life, I shall not remain here in this place after your case is closed.

With this post came letters from Guinea [stating] that all the people were rebellious. I believed that it was on St. Thomas. Rosenheim [11] has been in England and has sold the Guinea fort for 4,000 *rdl.* I have inquired about your instructions but can get no reply. For God's sake, be careful that you are not caught in others' snares. You must write in quite friendly fashion to the *Old Man* [12] so long as I am here.

Verily, I am quite melancholy, full of fear, grief and distress. I have been [so] unwell . . . that I have hardly been able to draw my breath. I have taken a purgative, and have had some blood let. Thank God, I am now somewhat better.

I am unable to get any money from Madame Westervyck; she has none. The president [13] here in Copenhagen is dead. I do

[4] Bolle Luxdorph had held various positions in the chancery since 1669. In 1680 he became a councilor and secretary to the chancery, in 1684, a councilor of state (*Etatsraad*), and in 1688, first secretary.

[5] Perhaps the Jens Harboe who was first secretary in the war department from 1691 to 1699, and a privy councilor.

[6] Jens Juel, the statesman.

[7] Matthias Moth. *Cf.* above, pp. 90–92.

[8] Probably Christian Mule, secretary in the chancery from 1685 to 1697.

[9] *Kreyert.*

[10] *Paa hans Regenskabs afkortning.*

[11] Jens Tolder (*Rosenheim*) had become a councilor of commerce (*Kommercc-raad*) in October, 1681, and in December had been elected to the board of shareholders in the Company. For Guinea negotiations, *cf.* Mariager, *Historisk Efterretning*, pp. 51 *et seq.*

[12] Possibly Steen Andersen Bille, "vice commandant" of the city of Copenhagen.

[13] This was Peder Resen, the predecessor of Hans Nansen, who became "Pres-

not know what sort of an account your cousin here in Vlissingen [14] has given you, for he hasn't even troubled himself to answer my letter since your departure. I beg of you to have nothing to do with him. You must not ship the cotton to England; no price can be got for it there. Deldyn seems to be your most reliable man; [he] is of the opinion that sugar and indigo are selling well in England, and he is a good man there.

I haven't much confidence in Johan Lorentz and all those who are associated with you, except [Hendrick] Irgens alone. The good God will guide you. I implore you most heartily, my dearest, to say your prayers to God and to keep him as your friend; then you need have no fear of anything men may do to you. And remember always the former grace, and feel obliged at all times to fear and serve him who has done such great things for you, and always will do. For otherwise you are miserable, poor, poor.

Hendriette greets you heartily. When you write, remember to write to Pauli; [15] he is my friend. You probably know that I have signed Marcolli's note, and at that time [when it is due], he must have his money. You must write to Claes Sohn,[16] and not forget Mr. Becker. Mr. Fadderbye is the best friend I have here. He sends you his greetings. Adieu, my dearest. That the good God may grant that we shall meet happily once more is the constant prayer of

Your affectionate
last wife,
Charité Esmits.

My sincere greetings to the good admiral. His entire family is in good health; his wife is to go to Holstein to her sister's wedding.

ident" of Copenhagen July 7, 1688. Resen had been an active member of the Council of State from 1673 to 1676, had become a councilor of justice in 1677, and councilor of state in 1684. He died June 1, 1688.

[14] Flushing.

[15] Oliger or *Holger* Pauli, the first secretary of the Company in its Copenhagen office.

[16] Claes or *Claus* Sohn was elected to the board of shareholders in 1679. Mariager, *op. cit.*, 31.

APPENDIX F

REPORT OF BOARD OF POLICE AND TRADE TO KING FREDERICK IV (1716)

Most mighty king,
Most gracious hereditary ruler:

In accordance with your Majesty's most gracious order, we humbly present herewith our sincere opinion concerning those privileges and [other] matters [in dispute] which the delegates sent out from St. Thomas in America have asked the West Indian Company to adjudicate that their commerce and means of livelihood might be sustained, [and] which the Company considers that it can not grant them without serious invasion of the rights granted it in the charter. Which points are as follows:

Query 1. Whether the inhabitants of St. Thomas may be permitted free trade with their goods, in America as well as in Europe (excepting Copenhagen and Hamburg) without the West India Company's charter being violated by said free trade?

The condition of the island ought to be observed in this connection; since it is such that nothing grows there except sugar, cotton-wool of which they make cotton, and millet, which is a sort of plant smaller than rice, and is used mainly by the poorest whites and by the slaves of the land. The nature of the soil and the climate is said to be such that nothing can grow there except beans and other small truck which cannot be taken to Europe; for which reason the inhabitants must necessarily procure from other places all things necessary for food as well as clothing, such as flour, meat, pork, butter, oil, cloths and stuffs, muslin, linen, leather, tobacco, all sorts of implements for cultivating their land, all kinds of tools for trades, and all their equipment of silver, tin, copper, iron and the like. Either the Company must bring these things to the planters in sufficient quantity for their daily needs, and at as reasonable a price as they can get them in that region from the English, French, and Spaniard colonies in the vicinity, or they must be allowed to seek them where they may.

[1] From *Politi- og Commerce-Collegiets Memorial Bog*, Bd. 21 (1716–1720), in Copenhagen Municipal Archives (*Raadstuearkiv*). The paragraphing is largely that of the translator. See above, pp. 179–180.

Hitherto the Company has not demonstrated its ability to provide them the planters with sufficient of the above-mentioned goods to satisfy their bare needs,—to say nothing of providing a plenty,—and even had they been able to bring in such goods, it would have been impossible, and will be still more so in the future, for them to bring in provisions at as low a price as they could have been secured in the neighboring colonies. For example, how will it be possible to bring in a barrel of English flour weighing 180–190 lbs. net for 6–7 *rdl.*, a bbl. of meat weighing 200 lbs. net at the same price, a barrel of pork for 10–11 *rdl.*, when the price here is very nearly as high? Besides it will also be difficult for the Company to furnish enough provisions to keep those lands properly supplied from one journey to another, and if that cannot be done, the inhabitants will surely die of hunger and so the Company would be the loser in the end. For unfortunately, there has not been a year since the first establishment of the Company, when it has been able to fit out and send from here more than a single ship, or at most two ships. How often, indeed, has it not happened, especially in times when these dominions or those of our neighbors have been disturbed by war, that St. Thomas has seen but a single ship every other year![2]

Next must be considered the goods which must be carried thither, and especially woolen and linen goods, which the Company must itself import from foreign places, and which it cannot, therefore, bring thither at the price at which they can be secured in the neighborhood; for either the Company must bring them in at a great loss, or St. Thomas must suffer the misfortune of being impoverished by paying exorbitant prices for such goods, and higher prices than are paid on all the surrounding islands. And if that happens, the colony will no doubt decay of itself, and the colonists move to other places where prices are more reasonable and there is greater freedom. Besides, it must be taken into consideration that some of the Company's ships on leaving here first sail to Guinea and the African coasts to fetch slaves, which are the very best and most profitable of commodities that can and must be brought to St. Thomas to be sold for the cultivation of the land and the development of the plantations. Now they are obliged to bring from here a double cargo, part of it to use for provisioning their forts and lodges in Guinea, and for purchasing slaves, and part for the West Indian colony; for which reason the ships that do

[2] *Ja hvor tit og besynderlig i ufreds Tiider saavel her i Rigerne som andensteds er det skeet at St. Thomas ikkun har seet eet Skib fra Compagniet hver Andet Aar.*

not sail directly to the colonies are en route so much longer. Meantime the colony is likely to be subject to various dangers, such as violent hurricanes which harry those regions yearly, and often bring great disaster down upon them; sea-robbers, who descend upon the land to rob its inhabitants; sicknesses and other plagues which are likely to increase their misery. All these things may come upon them without their being able by post to advise the Company thereon, and when they do not learn of the colonists' needs and sufferings until the ships arrive in the islands, they cannot bring with them the needed relief. Would it not be un-Christian, then, to forbid them the chance of making their living in the best way that they can, inasmuch as the Company itself is obliged almost every year to supply its own fortress and plantation from New York and [from] the surrounding islands, and ships practically nothing from here [Copenhagen] for their [St. Thomas'] provision?

Besides this, there are other goods in the islands, not including sugar and cotton, which the Company either will not or can not ship out, such as brandy, which they make from sugar cane, beans, cassava, [sweet] potatoes, yams, etc., on which products alone many families who have no plantations live, and which are brought in from other places.[3] It is indeed a sin that these goods should be lost to commerce, and the families either be forced to starve or to move out. And who would suffer more therefrom than the Company itself which would lose its surest and largest source of income,[4] the poll tax. [?]

The directors, to be sure, are continually harping upon their privileges and charter, which provides that no one, whoever he may be, excepting themselves alone, may trade with the colonies, but may not the colony seek its living and trade with outsiders, when the Company itself suffers no hardship thereby, and can secure enough return cargo for its ships [?] It appears, too, that the Company has lost nothing by the free trade which the inhabitants have connived to enjoy during the past few years,[5] inasmuch as it has not only had full cargoes for the homeward voyages, but while its ship has been lying in the harbor [in St. Thomas], the Company has frequently disposed of two or three cargoes to other places before its own ship was loaded. The directors may say that this occurred without their knowledge or consent. But it is scarcely believable that

[3] *Alleeniste leve, og andensteds henföres.*

[4] *Intrade.*

[5] *Ved Ind Byggernes Fri Handel, som de nu i nogle Aar af deres Connivence have nydt. . . .*

their servant (the governor) should have been a party to such peculation within sight of the Company's own ship, which was to take on all [the cargo] that there was and that it could secure and take back to the home land, without special orders or permission.

It also appears that the Company has not suffered through the free trade thus connived at, since they permit their own plantations, which are the largest and best, to lie uncultivated, and to be used, according to report, only as grazing land for their horses and mules; so that one is inclined to ask how the needed provisions could be obtained upon the island, except through the inhabitants enjoying free trade, which enables them to secure much white and brown sugar from the French colonies.

From all of which circumstances, we can by no means concede that free trade with the surrounding islands should be forbidden to the inhabitants, because they should not be subjected to privation as a result of the Company's and colony's prosperity and growth, because they ought not to be treated with greater severity than the other neighboring colonies round about, since thereby the island might become desolate and other nations might avail themselves of an opportunity to seize it; because they ought not to be treated as serfs and slaves of the Company, since they are, indeed, a free people. If the Company would confine its restrictions to one sort of goods or another, which they were not to be allowed to ship out of the island, and if it would, on the other hand, agree to take such produce from them at a reasonable price, and also to furnish them with all necessaries, which it cannot possibly do, such as the free use of money,[6] horses, mules, etc., it wouldn't have been so bad, and then the Company and the colony might submit to certain rules, as is the case with Iceland and the Færoe islands, but now it is making such demands that we can by no means lend it support. It is not necessary to forbid free trade with Europe, except with Hamburg, Bremen and Denmark.

Query 2. Whether the Company shall have the right of preemption [with respect to colonial goods] in the colony and [if so] at what prices?

The Company should indisputably have the right of preemption, as the Company's store-house must always have a sufficient quantity on hand to furnish full cargoes for its ships on their return voyages. But it ought to be observed that such right of priority should not be abused, either by the Company or by its employees at the forts and lodges, as they have hitherto

[6] *Gratia Contanter.*

done to their own profit and the loss and injury of the inhabitants. For the way the Company's employees there have managed and kept the inhabitants from making a living has been improper and ought not to have been tolerated.

If the Company could inform the inhabitants how large a cargo it planned to take out, it should certainly furnish its pack houses with the needed quantity; but the Company should, on the other hand, either be obliged to keep up its own plantations, which are the best, or they should sell or rent them to others on such terms as would be considered reasonable on the island. For when these plantations lie uncultivated the colony must make up the difference, and thus they will lack produce to sell to private traders in exchange for provisions. The chief question of dispute will be the price.

The directors maintain that they should secure the produce at one-sixth less than the current market price. The colonists say, on the other hand, that this amounts to more than 16 per cent.,[7] and are unable to perceive why they should sell their goods at a better rate than the market price, inasmuch as they are now paying a six per cent. duty on all outgoing goods, whereas previously they paid but four per cent., and where they formerly paid no duties on incoming goods, they now pay five per cent. Hence the Company, after it had permitted free trade [8] now receives seven per cent. more of the colonists' goods than before, and if it should now secure their goods at one-sixth off, it would then secure twenty-three per cent., and poll tax for persons over 16 and 20 years of age, whether they are free or slave, besides; which runs up to a pretty considerable total.

It is our firm conviction that the inhabitants [of St. Thomas] have much reason on their side. The prospect of their losing so high a percentage of their produce is hard indeed, since they must not only pay a high price for their plantations, and for living on and cultivating the land, but also pay so large an import and export tax, especially [large] in view of the necessity of importing from abroad all their food and clothing.

What is most to be feared is that the most substantial of the inhabitants will put their heads together and deliberately raise the price of the goods which should be delivered to the Company. But to that they have replied that such was impossible, for the Company's employees being in business as well as themselves, are as well informed concerning the state of the market, and

[7] Crossed out in MS.: *af alle udgaaende Vahre, i stæden de ickun Gave.*

[8] *Siden de Conniverede udi Deres fri Handel.*

when they so desire, they can both raise and lower (*sic*) the price as they please.[9] It is our humble opinion that since the Company has already raised their customs duties, both for exports and imports, in which matter the colony will make no protest if those taxes shall remain unchanged where they are at present, it would be very severe, indeed, if the planters should have to dispose of their produce at such a fearful loss; for the Company has already a sufficient handicap, both through its prior right of purchase, and its customs duties.

Query 3 is whether or not planters who leave the island should pay the sixths and tenths out of their resources which the directors claim, and which they have never known of nor paid hitherto until the year 1702, when one was compelled to pay it. Besides, when anyone at present comes to the island, they receive from the privy council there a promise of exemption from that tax should they desire to move away. . . .[10]

For one must distinguish between Europe where such *Abzug Gelder, Nachsteuer, Jus Detractionis,* and other [taxes], by whatever name they might be called, are everywhere in use, and the regions of Africa and America, where they are not used. Here in Europe, it is *Jus Gentium,* but it is by no means thus in those lands, and if it is not practicable in one place, it is hardly advisable to introduce it in another [near at hand] unless the object is to instil a fear of such a place in men's minds, and prevent them from coming there to settle. The directors should consider that scarcely one tenth—indeed hardly one twelfth—of the colony consists of native Danes, but most of them are Dutch, English and French, for there are reported to be not more than ten or twelve Danish families who are in a position to own slaves or plantations or to carry on trade. The rest are foreigners. . . .[11]

Query 5.[12] Whether it is advisable that a number of the leading inhabitants shall have seats in the council or the courts, in matters concerning the internal affairs of the island?

The directors oppose this, since they fear the inhabitants will become too greedy for power and encroach by intrigue upon the Company's sovereignty and commercial privileges.[13] But we are of the opinion that if their rights are limited to certain fields,

[9] *Hvorefter de meest faar at rette Sig.*

[10] Various elaborate arguments against these taxes are here omitted.

[11] Arguments favoring various definite immunities and guarantees along the lines above indicated conclude the reply to Query 3.

[12] Query 4 does not appear in the MS.

[13] *Intriguere sig udi Deres Eyendoms Rett of Deres Præference udi Negocen.*

such as disputes arising within the islands, *De Meo et Tuo* and other matters in which the Company is not interested, then a number of the most intelligent and best of the inhabitants should have a place in the courts. But that concerns the [department of] justice and not the Board of Trade. Yet we shall take the liberty of saying that in so far as we have been informed by the [St. Thomas] delegates, the administration of justice there should beyond doubt be recognized and placed upon a different footing; which need is indicated by their complaints concerning the probating of their estates.

The remaining grievances and *Gravamina* have to do with fugitive slaves, the seizure of their vessels, and the like, in which matters we have nothing more to suggest than either the seeking for satisfactory adjustment through your majesty's efforts, or reprisals, if such are possible, or to give blow for blow, for which the Company is too weak. But with respect to the calling or securing of ministers, as well as freedom in the exercise of religion,[14] the directors have already promised a remedy. . . .

Besides all this, some of us have hit upon the idea that your royal majesty might himself place a commandant at the fort who might be supported from those imposts which the Company draws from the island, such as customs duties and poll tax; and the commandant could defend the inhabitants when any injustice was done them. Besides, the inhabitants and their property would be more secure against unexpected attack, concerning which rumors of danger have gone out this spring, inasmuch as the fort is described as being in so poor a condition that it is to be feared that unless an improvement takes place there will be danger of losing the island. This is discussed in the communication of the [St. Thomas] deputies, art. 2, of May 20, 1716, and further in the letter of the inhabitants dated F[ebruary] 24, 1716, already referred to, wherein it appears that for a long time the garrison has consisted of not more than twenty-two soldiers largely incapacitated by lack of food and proper care; for in five or six months they had received no wages, so that they had become desperate [and] wished to be relieved. Besides, for this small garrison, there was not more than one month's provisions, only ten usable pieces, two hundred good balls; no small arms to put in the hands of the inhabitants; the commandant is apparently not a man of military training, but interested more in trade than in looking out for such matters of necessity. . . .[15]

[14] *Libero exercitio Religionis.*

[15] Here the members of the investigating Board failed to agree, J. B. Ernst, A.

Your royal majesty's most humble, dutiful and faithful servants

N[iels] Slange J[ohan] B[ertram] Ernst A[ndreas] Franck
C[hristian] Braem M[orten] Munck
M[arkus] Johansen A[braham] Klöcker [16]

Board of Police and Trade [Copenhagen] June [?], 1716.

To this statement was added the following: Information concerning the cargo which the last ship sent by the Company took with it from the fatherland to St. Thomas in the West Indies.

Bricks
Klincker
Tilestones
Norwegian planks
Rope
Pitch and tar, though they may be secured cheaper from New York

A small quantity of copper work, such as sugar kettles and the like, of which nothing has been sent thither during recent years, so that the planters have been forced to supply their needs from other sources.
Silesian linen
Grindstones
A small quantity of Lübeck beer
Iron

Goods which the colony on St. Thomas needs and must procure from other places:

Victuals: Meat, pork, butter, etc. May be secured at far lower prices in New York than in Denmark.

Goods for clothing, etc. English stuffs, wool and silk stockings, woolen and silk *puoser* (?), camelots, English *Bay* (?), Holland linen, French "Rouan" [*Rouen* cloth], table-cloths, all kinds of linens from Flanders, Westphalia, Harlem and other places,[17] silk and threads, flax and hemp, lace, pottery, spices, iron implements for the cultivation of plantations, domestic implements, sail cloth.

From the French islands: sugar, both white and brown, cacao, indigo, ginger, powder, money.

Franck, C. Braem, and M. Johansen favoring prompt reinforcements, the others arguing that this matter was not for them, but for the King and the Company to determine.

[16] Of these Braem had been on the directorial board since 1697, and Klöcker was to become a director in 1727.

[17] The last four or five items "may be had from the English, French, and Dutch islands."

From the Spanish islands: cattle, hides and leather, cacao, Virginia tobacco, money, etc.

Exceedingly necessary for sugar mills and plantations: mules from the Spaniards; horses from New York.

From the English: Brazil-wood, Campeachy and other woods suitable for rasping and dyes.

APPENDIX G

GOVERNOR ERIK BREDAL TO DIRECTORS, 1719, 1722 [1]

St. Thomas, May 25, 1719.

. . . The English nation is the one that does us the most good, and from which we have most to fear, for truth to say, they hold our very lives in their hands; and if they, (who dispute our right to St. Thomas, and threaten St. John) should adopt the expedient of forbidding the sending of provisions to this place for half a year, the inhabitants would be obliged to leave the island, for their live-stock (now that the land is laid out in cotton and sugar works) would not suffice, according to my calculation, to keep them supplied with food during that time, the less so, since a butchered ox cannot be preserved here more than a couple of days on account of the heat.

But although the English General Hamilton [2] might entertain such a plan because of the evil intentions he bears toward this land on account of the occupation of St. John, yet it is fortunate for us that the governors of the other English colonies from which we secure provisions are not on good terms with him, and are not prepared to carry through any such plan. Besides, Mr. Hamilton might easily have taken the chance (considering the malice he bears us) to ruin both of these islands if he had thought of it. For a long time, there have been a great many English sea-robbers here, who have always kept their posts at the English islands Spanishtown (*sic*) and Tortola, where they have had free passage. He would only have had to set them upon us secretly to bring about our ruin. For the amnesty that they have been granted is so liberal that they cannot even be held by the English inhabitants for murder, robbery or other misdeeds, if they but return within a certain time and receive amnesty. In that manner the French have received the greater part of Hispaniola [Haiti] from the Spaniards in the midst of peace. I do not say it because of any fear, and I do not think that anyone accuses me of that, but because of the caution which I think is needed here to prevent the seizure or plundering of this land (especially in the cold months when sickness is general),—which may God avert!—

[1] *B. & D., 1717–1720.* The paragraphing is that of the translator.

[2] Governor General of the English Leeward Islands.

either by the Spaniards or the sea-robbers; for our garrison amounts to nothing, and the land is weaker than one would believe, since in the course of time, three or four plantations have come under a single owner, so that where formerly there were four whites, there is now but one. Indeed, we are not strong enough with respect to the negroes themselves. I have warned the inhabitants that this land is becoming weaker, and that they should have one white man on each plantation, whether or not several were under one owner, but they have replied that they were unable to secure any, but that if I were willing to let them have some of the soldiers, as had previously occurred, they would take them. But none of them can be spared. It has actually been a fact that the foreign ships and vessels lying in the harbor have sometimes had four times as many men on board as the entire fort and island together. . . .

St. Thomas, June 17, 1722 [3]

Enclosed herewith is a letter from the English General Hart who was sent here with two ships of war to request St. John of me, and also to inform me that the English also claim St. Thomas as belonging to them. I have replied to them as was my duty, and attempted to phrase my negative reply as politely as possible. I gave to Capt. Ellis Brand's proposition a similar reply, to which he replied that he would report it to his General, and that the occupation of St. John might cause the Danes to lose St. Thomas, too, since they had no right to it, either. News had also reached me from St. Christopher, before the arrival of these ships, that the English said that they expected to go and seize St. Thomas and St. John. Nevertheless, these ships left here without attempting anything, after having lain anchored far outside of the harbor for several days.

Although one would suppose that the said two islands are not worth enough to the English to pay for their getting into trouble with Denmark, yet there is reason to suspect that they would be useful for the following design. It is known that they have long had an eye upon Porto Rico, and with St. Thomas and Crab island (which they are also talking of settling) in their possession, they would be able, on account of their sea power, so to hem Porto Rico in [4] that they would make themselves masters of it on the first break with Spain. Likewise, they have also a short time ago seized the island of Providence in the straits of Bahama, which though not considered of any

[3] *B. & D., 1721–24.*

[4] *Saaledes indknibe og indspærre Puerto-rico . . .*

particular importance in Europe, is still of more consequence than one would readily believe, for the Spaniards are absolutely obliged to pass by it with their silver fleet; and the English could from this island as well as by land from Virginia disturb the whole coast of Florida.

How bold that nation has become was recently shown in their attitude toward the French who took the uninhabited island of St. Lucia, for the English immediately sent ships thither and drove them out; and since they are so strong in America, the French have allowed the matter to rest there, although the French General, Marquis de Feuquirêres, at once dispatched an express to Europe to complain of the shameless treatment accorded an officer of the king and the duly constituted French governor at that place. . . .

APPENDIX H

STATISTICS FOR ST. THOMAS: POPULATION, PLANTATIONS[1]

Population

White	1688	1691	1715	1720	1725	1733	1740	1745	1754
men		212	155	155	155	173	121	144	139
women			145	127	169	159	128	127	89
children		177	247	283	not given				
total	317	389	547	565					
Negro									
men		361	1157	1507	1633	2246	837	635	909
women			613	873	979		750	748	849
manq				694	684	1495	968	933	979
children		194	1272	1113	1194		578	678	744
total	422	555	3042	4187	4490	3741	3133	2994	3481

Plantations

C. Pl	81	1	11	13	9	10	5	6
C. W		69	61	74	68	66	55	64
S. Pl	3	8	34	24	11	8	4	9
S. W		32	24	31	32	28	34	28
K. W		16	10	8	6	3		1
Mixt	17	34	24	27	27	38	8	46
Total	90	101	160	164	177	148	153	108	154

Abbreviations:
C. Pl. = Cotton plantations.
C. W. = " " with "works."
S. Pl. = Sugar "
S. W. = " " "
K. W. = Kill-devil works.
Mixt. = Plantations with various products, including provisions or "Kaast" and Misc. those not surveyed.
Cap. = Slaves capable of performing full adult work.
Manq. = "Manquerons" or those incapacitated by reason of age, injury, etc.; defectives.
Pl. = Plantations.

[1] These tables have been compiled largely from the *Land Lister* in the Company's archives.

APPENDIX I

STATISTICS FOR ST JOHN AND ST CROIX: POPULATION, PLANTATIONS

ST. JOHN

Population

	Whites					*Negroes*		
	Men	*Women*	*Children*	*Total*	*Cap.*	*Manq.*	*Children*	*Total*
1728	76	6	41	123	563[1]	84	30	677
1733	97	53	58	208	731	119	237	1087
1739	73	60	75	208	743	280	391	1414

Plantations.

	C. Pl.	*C. W.*	*S. Pl.*	*S. W.*	*K. W.*	*Mixt.*	*Total*	*Owners On Pl.*	*Owners on St. Th.*	*Owners abroad*
1720–21							39			
1728	48	0	8	21	1	9	87	28	36	1
1733	15	3	1	9	1	80	109	67	4	1
1739	29	36	3	21	0	20	109	61	?	3

For abbreviations, see St. Thomas statistics.

ST. CROIX

Population

	Plantation owners[2]		*Children under*		Negroes (total)				*Christiansted* Whites		Negroes		
	Men	*Women*	*age*	*Total*	*Cap.*	*Manq.*	*Child.*	*Total*	*M.*	*W.*	*Cap.*	*Mq.*	*Ch.*
1742	146	23	5[3]	174	1559	31	316	1906					
1745	162	30	19	211	1918	217	743	2878	10	3	15	3	9
1754	260	23	21	304	4851	675	2040	7566[4]	77	7	409	46	259

Plantations

	C. Pl.	*S. Pl.*	*Misc.*	*Total*
1742	122	120	42	264
1745	163	77	23	263
1754	34	134½	207	375½

[1] The women included one mulatto; the children, ten groups of "heirs," each of which embraced perhaps two or more children. Several owners counted in the list for 1739 resided on St. Thomas, St. Eustatius and elsewhere.

[2] The nature of the records makes possible only an approximation to accuracy, especially with respect to the white population.

[3] Five is simply the number of plantations credited to minors.

[4] Of these, four hundred and nine "capable," forty defectives, and two hundred and thirty-nine children were owned in Christiansted.

APPENDIX J

LIST OF SLAVE CARGOES ARRIVING IN DANISH WEST INDIES

(COMPILED FROM THE COMPANY'S ARCHIVES)

Ship (and Skipper)	*Date of arrival*	*Registered from*	*Slave cargoes*						*Cost to Company (wholesale)*	*Cost to Planters (retail)*
			Men	*Women*	*Boys*	*Girls*	*B. & G.*	*Total [P. de Indies]*		
									rdl. (each)	*rdl.*(each)
Wapen (Gert. Cort)	1687 (May)							80		
(Danish Ship) (Captain?)	1688	Denmark						200		
Marschall Dörfling	1688	Emden						291		
[English Ship]	1690 (Apr.)	Bermuda						[109?]		
Marschall Dörfling (Captain?)	1692	Emden						500?	80–95	
Frederick III (Jacob Lambrecht)	1696 (Nov.)	Emden						630		
Churprinsessen (Wouter Ypes)	1696 (Nov.)	Emden						480		
[*Slave vessel*] (Jac. de Bruyne)	1698 (June)	Zeeland (Nether.)						364		
Köbenh: Börs (InnesPieters)	1698 (Sept.)		78	128	44	14	16	280 [1]		
[*Frederick III?*] (Wouter Ypes)	1698 (late)	Emden?						624		
[*Slave vessel*] (Math. Boogaert)	1699	Zeeland						[90] [2]	70	90
Christian V (Jürgen Grabner)	1699 (July)		123	178	35	17		353 [3]		85–90

[1] There were shipped from Guinea one hundred and eighty-four men, two hundred and thirty-eight women, fifty-five boys, twenty-four girls, and five infants, a total of five hundred and six negroes. Of the two hundred and eighty that arrived on September 17, thirty-seven had died by October 12. *Cf. Gov. C. B., 1694–1700,* Lorentz to Directors (October 12, 1698).

[2] Only ninety were sold in St. Thomas, fifty to the Danes and forty to the Brandenburgers. The cargo contained three hundred and fifty slaves.

[3] Capt. Grabner took on five hundred and forty-nine negroes in Guinea.

LIST OF SLAVE CARGOES—*Continued*

Ship (and Skipper)	*Date of arrival*	*Registered from*	*Slave Cargoes*						*Cost to Company (wholesale)*	*Cost to Planters (retail)*
			Men	*Women*	*Boys*	*Girls*	*B. & G.*	*Total [P. de Indies]*		
Frederick IV (Innes Pietersen)	1700 (Oct.)	Denmark	72	119	27	20		238 [1]	50	90–100
[Interloper] (Captain?)	1701 (Jan.)	Zeeland						154 [2]		
[Interloper] (Jean Closter)	1702 (July)	Zeeland	74	21	12	2		109 [3] [103 1/3]	45	80
[Interloper] (Adrian Daemes)	1702 (Dec.)	Zeeland	51	14	18	6		89 [4] [79 5/6]	45	80
[Interloper] (J. Roggestaert)	1703 (June)	?	77	10	16	5		108 [5] [99 1/6]	48	85–90
Christian V (Willem Resen)	1704 (May)	Denmark	123	126	27	15	4	295 [271 1/3]	60	100
[*Flying Hart*] (Jac. S. Voss)	1707 (Jan.)	Middelburg	246	69	62	10		387 [356 2/3]	80	100
Christian V (N. C. Boomfeldt)	1707 (July)	Denmark	212	160	13	8		393 [6] [385 1/3]	70	100
[*Slave vessel*] [7] ("Grazaleir")	1708 (Mar.)	?	33	27	13	11		84 [73]	75	100
Red Lion (Hubert Freth)	1708 (Oct.)	Zeeland	139	30	34	9		212 [8]	80	100
[*Flying Hart?*] (Jac. S. Voss)	1709 (Jan.)	Zeeland	227	54	20	12		313 [9] [299 1/6]	80	100
[Slave vessel] (Captain?)	1709 (July)	Zeeland						85	60	
Two Brothers (Pieter Thebeu)	1709 (July)	?	17	14	3	5		39 [35 2/3]	60	90

[1] Three hundred died on the journey. In his letter to the Directors dated October 24, 1700, Lorentz mentions the misfortune that has likewise struck other traders, several Zeeland interlopers and English slave ships not having brought more than a third or a fourth safe to their destination. *Gov. C. B., 1700–03.*

[2] Lorentz bought the cargo in company with Van Belle, the Brandenburg factor.

[3] Of these the Danish Company secured one hundred and eighteen, the Brandenburgers the rest.

[4] The Brandenburg factor bought eighty-eight from Capt. Daemes.

[5] The Brandenburg factor bought sixty-six.

[6] Capt. B. had left Guinea on June 2 with four hundred and forty-seven slaves, and arrived at St. Thomas on July 23.

[7] Also spelled Grazselli.

[8] Four per cent. duty brought the Company an additional eight slaves.

[9] Of these, Peter Smith bought one hundred and forty-one, and two Frenchmen bought twenty-six and one hundred and seven, respectively.

LIST OF SLAVE CARGOES—*Continued*

Ship (and Skipper)	*Date of arrival*	*Registered from*	*Slave cargoes*						*Cost to Company (wholesale)*	*Cost to Planters (retail)*
			Men	*Women*	*Boys*	*Girls*	*B. & G.*	*Total [P. de Indies]*		
Rosenborg (Erasmus Muller)	1709 (Aug.)	Zeeland	138	22	19	3		187[1] [172⅝]	60	90–95
The Hunter (H. de Witte)	1710 (Jan.)	Zeeland						312[2]	65	100
America (David Dinesen)	1710 (July)	Zeeland	134	26	33	7		200	65	100
Prince Eugene (Abr. Schilstrad)[4]	1711 (Jan.)	Zeeland	[229][3]		16			253	96	
[*America*] (David Dinesen)	1712 (Mar.)	Zeeland	155	25	26	6		212[5] [196⅝]	70	100
[*Slave vessel*] (Sam. Jochumsen)	1712 (June)	Zeeland?	134	27		32	7	200[6] [178⅝]	65	94
[Slave vessel] (H. de Witte)	1714 (Jan.)									none sold
New Prince Eugene (Bastian Mugge)	1714 (Jan.)	Zeeland	76	56	76	6		216 [173½]	70	100–96
Papkiesborg (Corn. Huysing)	1714 (Mar.)	Zeeland	121	30	72	3		226 [193]	65	100
Crown Prince (Jacques Thomas)	1714 (June)	Bergen	49	45	24	1	7	135 [111⅔]	70	120
			9	4	2		3[7]	18 [15½]	50	

[1] One hundred and eighty-seven "manquerons" were delivered back to the captain, who sold one hundred and twenty-seven to private buyers for 5,459 *rdl.* Muller's cargo is put down as consisting of Lawango negroes; those arriving in July are called "Calabary" or "Kalbarie" negroes,—in English, Calabar.

[2] De Witte, being able to account only for three hundred and one when he should have had three hundred and twelve, was charged with the difference or "profit" of 35 *rdl.* each, or 385 *rdl.* The Company bought two hundred and thirty-eight (229½ Pies de Indies) at 65 *rdl.* each. Many of those remaining were delivered back to the captain who sold them to planters and paid the Company the four per cent. duty. *N. J., St. Thomas, 1709–1710.*

[3] This includes men and women. Of the two hundred and twenty-nine, forty-nine were sick or "manquerons" as were six of the sixteen boys. Two hundred were bought first, and fifty-three later.

[4] Capt. S. died immediately after arrival and Capt. Anthony Warene (Vareny) took his place. The remainder of the cargo (six hundred and twenty-six on arrival at St. Thomas) that was unsold or still alive was taken to Porto Bello and Carthagena.

[5] Besides these, the Company received eight in duty.

[6] Jochumson's cargo consisted of Angola slaves.

[7] The lower figures represent those that were sick or "manquerons." One

LIST OF SLAVE CARGOES—*Continued*

Ship (and Skipper)	*Date of arrival*	*Registered from*	*Slave Cargoes*						*Cost to Company (wholesale)*	*Cost to Planters (retail)*
			Men	*Women*	*Boys*	*Girls*	*B. & G.*	*Total [P. de Indies]*		
[*Slave vessel*] (Jacob Valle)	1715 (Jan.)		83	7	20		8	118	65	100
[*Slave vessel*] (Corn. Lynsen)	1715 (Feb.)							[103 1/3]		
[*Slave vessel*] (Jochim Gomertz)	1715 (Apr.)									
[*Slave vessel*] (Alex. Roland)	1715 (Apr.)									
[*Slave vessel*][1] (Dan. Gabion?)	1715 (Sept.)									
Crown Prince Christian (And. Veröe)	1718 (July)	Denmark	104	38	19	3		164 [2]	50	120
[*Slave vessel*] (Jan de Moor)	1718 (July)							42	60	80
[*Slave vessel*] (Jacob Valle)	1719 (Aug.)									
"*Haabet Galley*" (Lor. Spang?)	1722 (Apr.)	Denmark	[167][3]				34	201 [182 2/3]	60	125
Christiansborg (P. A. Væröe)	1724 (June)	Denmark	142 26	80 11			68 24[5]	351	70	125 [4]
"*Haabet Galley*" (Lor. Spang)	1724 (Nov.)							219	70	125
[*Slave vessel*] (Jan Vergoue)	1725 (Mar.)	Netherl.?						375	73	120 [6]

hundred and seventy-one negroes (sixty-eight men, fifty-seven women, twenty-six boys and twenty girls) were shipped from Guinea, and of these, eight men, five women, two boys, and five girls died en route.

[1] Capt. Gabion was allowed to sell his cargo to private buyers on payment of thirty per cent. "preference" to the Company. "On Capt. Gabion's slaves about 2600 *rdl.* has been gained [by the Company] through import and export duties." *B. & D., 1714–17*, Gov. M. Crone to Directors (February 24, 1716).

[2] On the way from Guinea thirty-six men, seven women, four girls and five boys—or fifty-two slaves—had died on Capt. Veröe's (or Wærröe's) ship. *B. & D., 1717–20* (July 8, 1718).

[3] The one hundred and sixty-seven includes men and women.

[4] The profit from this cargo was about 7,464 *rdl.*, or a little over twenty-eight per cent. Deducting for the twenty-one slaves retained for the Company would bring the profit to about thirty and one-half per cent.

[5] The lower figures include the sick and "manquerons." A "Speciall-Liste" (*B. & D., 1721–24*) dated July 14, 1724, gives the same total, but different subheadings. He had left Guinea with four hundred and sixteen negroes.

[6] The net profit was 16,372 *rdl.*, or twenty-nine and seven-tenths per cent. from both Vergoue's and v. der Brocke's cargoes.

LIST OF SLAVE CARGOES—*Continued*

Ship (and Skipper)	*Date of arrival*	*Registered from*	*Slave cargoes*						*Cost to Company (wholesale)*	*Cost to Planters (retail)*
			Men	*Women*	*Boys*	*Girls*	*B. & G.*	*Total [P. de Indies]*		
[*Slave vessel*] (A. v. d. Brocke)	1725 (Mar.)	Netherl.?						379	73	
[*Young Knight*] (George Jones?)	1726 (July)							130 [1]		
"*Jonge Mathys*" [2] (Charles Jansen)	1726 (Nov.)	Netherl.?								
Christiansborg (Jörgen Mathisen)	1727 (Feb.)	Denmark	109	65	23	10		207 [3]	70	125
"*Haabet Galley*" (Lor. Spang)	1727 (May)	Denmark	125	63	16	13		[217] [4]	70	125
[*Slave vessel*] (Hybregt)	1727	Zeeland						18	50	
Young Virgin ("Allewelt")	1728 (Jan.)	Denmark?						32 [5]		
"*Haabet*" *G.* (A. H. Hammer)	1729 (July)	Denmark	63	45	14	4		126 [6]	70	120
"*Haabet*" *G.* (A. H. Hammer)	1731 (Feb.)	Denmark	21	29	5			55 [7]	70	120
Countess of Laurwig (Corn. Bagge)	1732 (June)	Denmark						115	80	100–150 [8]
Laarburg G. (Lor. Jæger)	1733 (May)	Denmark	124	64	26	28		242 [9]	70 +	120–156

[1] The government permitted the cargo to be sold to outsiders only, on payment of 4¼ "pieces-of-eight" for each slave sold.

[2] A cargo was offered for sale, but no purchases are recorded.

[3] Two hundred and eighty-three were taken on board at the Danish Guinea factory, September 29, 1726. These included one hundred and fifty men, ninety women, twenty-nine boys, fourteen girls, whose total purchase price was entered at 18,216 *rdl.*

[4] Hope Galley left Guinea on March 6, 1727, with a cargo of two hundred and thirty-eight. Of these, one hundred and forty-seven were men, seventy women, eleven boys, and ten girls. *Cf. N. J. for Guinea, 1727.*

[5] Forty-seven left Guinea. G = galley.

[6] One hundred and twenty-six left Guinea May 28, 1729.

[7] These were taken on in Guinea, Dec. 28, 1729 (?).

[8] The price varied according to whether payment was made in cash, or in cotton or sugar to be paid in six weeks' time. Of one hundred and twenty taken on, only one hundred and two were reported in sound condition when offered for sale.

[9] One hundred and ninety-nine out of a cargo of four hundred and forty-three

LIST OF SLAVE CARGOES—*Continued*

Ship (*and Skipper*)	*Date of arrival*	*Registered from*	*Slave Cargoes*						*Cost to Company* (*wholesale*)	*Cost to Planters* (*retail*)
			Men	*Women*	*Boys*	*Girls*	*B. & G.*	*Total* [*P. de Indies*]		
Countess of Laurwig (Corn. Bagge)	1734 (May)	Denmark	60 22	31 43	7 7	5 5 [1]		180		115
Jomfru (Knud Erichsen)	1736 (June)	Denmark?						108 [2]	100	100–133
[*A bark*] (P. Heyliger)	1738 (Jan.)	St. Eustatius	8	4	35	10		57		
[*A bark*] (Robt. Stewart)	1738 (Feb.)	St. Eustatius						10	£18	
[*A bark*] (Robt. Stewart)	1738 (Mar.)	St. Eustatius	9	14	8	8		39 [3]		
[*A bark*] (R. Stewart)	1738 (Apr.)	St. Eustatius	20	20			15	55 [4]	£18	
Countess of Laurwig (Corn. Marskalk)	1738 (Oct.)	Zeeland	109	35	15	11		170	85	
Countess of Laurwig (J. N. Holst)	1739 (Feb.)	Denmark (Co.)	6	8	5	1		20 [5]	75	120–140
Laarburg G. (H. Ostbye)	1740 (Jan.)	Denmark (Co.)	24	12	6	2		44	120	130–140
Countess of Laarwig (Capt. Holst?)	1742 (June)	Denmark (Co.)	19	27	4	1		51	120	140–155
Williamine Galley (B. H. Pratt)	1744 (May)	?	41	40	11	3		95	130	140–235
Postillion B. (A. Thorsen)	1746 (May)	Denmark						79		150–240
Williamine G. (B. H. Pratt)	1746 (Nov.)	Denmark (Co.)	85	38	18	5		146	100–150	160–300
Crown Pr. Desire (A. J. Seierö)	1747 (May)	Denmark (Co.)	102	60	25	8		195		150–300
Sorgenfri (D. Boysen)	1747 (Nov.)	Denmark						274		200–285
Princess F. (J. Grönberg)	1748 (July)	Denmark	114	86	55	20	3	278		200–320
Jægersborg (O. Erichsen)	1749 (Jan.)	Denmark (Co.)	77	62	15	6		160	100	180–270
Vesuvius (Capt.?)	1749 (Feb.)	Denmark (Co.)	127	66	45	14	5	252	100	
Sorgenfri (Capt.?)	1749 (June)	Denmark (Co.)	120	89	15	11	7 3	235	100	140–220

died en route of a virulent form of dysentery. Two were sold to Portuguese. The profit was nevertheless sixty-nine and one-half per cent. on what remained!

[1] Sick and "manquerons," or defectives.

[2] Forty-two had died on the way from Guinea.

[3] Sold directly to planters on payment of usual four per cent. duty.

[4] Capt. S. had asked 110 *rdl.* for the grown slaves, and 80 *rdl.* for the children.

[5] Capt. Holst's cargo came from Madagascar.

LIST OF SLAVE CARGOES—*Continued*

Ship (and Skipper)	*Date of arrival*	*Registered from*	*Slave cargoes*						*Cost to Company (wholesale)*	*Cost to Planters (retail)*
			Men	*Women*	*Boys*	*Girls*	*B. & G.*	*Total [P. de Indies]*		
Crown Pr. Desire (O. Reinholt)	1750 (Feb.)	Denmark (Co.)	69	53	26	10		161	100	140–220
Sophie Magdalene (Capt.?)	1750 (July)	Denmark (Co.)	27	23	22	5	3	80		–220
Jægersborg (O. Erichsen)	1751 (Feb.)	Denmark (Co.)	182	82	5		3	269	100	100–220
Sorgenfri (P. K. Collin)	1751 (July)	Denmark (Co.)	58	42	23	10		133	100	150–250
Crown Pr. Desire (O. Reinholt)	1752 (Mar.)	Denmark						224 [1]		–353
Princess Wilhelmine Car. (N. Höyer)	1752 (June)	Denmark	109	58	12		2	181 [2]		
Princess Sophia Mag. (P. C. Samsöe)	1752 (Oct.)	Denmark (Co.)	164	81	27	9	3	281 [3]	100	150–354
Jægersborg (J. Rasmussen)	1753 (Aug.)	Denmark	114	58	38	21		231 [4]		–320
Patientia (O. Erichsen)	1753 (Dec.)	Denmark (Co.)	67	30	38	11		146 [5]	100	150–300
(*Brigantine*)	1754 (Mar.)	Denmark						140 [6]		

[1] This ship left Guinea with three hundred and thirty-eight slaves (January 7, 1752).

[2] The Guinea cargo was recorded at two hundred and three slaves.

[3] The *Princess Sophia Magdalena* left Guinea July 29 with three hundred and seven slaves.

[4] Eighty-one died on the way, apparently.

[5] *Patientia* left Guinea July 30 with two hundred and seventy-five slaves. A mutiny of slaves on board while sailing between Cape Coast and El Mina resulted in serious loss of life and property.

[6] From this cargo, apparently privately owned, a profit of fifty per cent. was reported. The journey took twenty-eight days.

APPENDIX K

PRICES ON ST. THOMAS (1687–1751) [1]

Year	Sugar [2] (per 100 lbs.)	Cotton (per lb.)	Year	Sugar (per 100 lbs.)	Cotton (per lb.)
1687		10 *sk*	1721	3½ *rdl.*	13 *sk.*
1688		10 "	1723	3 "	10 "
1697		30–32 "	1724	4½ "	12–13 "
1699		14–16 "	1727		13 "
1701	5 *rdl.*		1728	4½ "	13 "
1702	4½–5 "	15 "	1730	4 "	13 "
1703	3½(?)"	12 "	1732	4½ "	11 "
1705	3 "	12 "	1733	3–4½ "	11–13 "
1706	3½ "	12 "	1739	3–3½ "	14–14½"
1707	3–3½ "	11 "	1740	3½ "	
1708	3 "	10 "	1741	4–4½ "	12–13 "
1709	3 "		1742	4 "	10–11 "
1710	3 "	11 "	1743	4 "	12–13 "
1713 [3]	3½ "	12 "	1744		13½"
1714	4 "	12 "	1747 [4]	5 "	
1716	4½–5 "	13–14 "	1748	5 "	
1717	4½ "	13 "	1750	4½ "	2 reals
1719	4½ "	13 "	1751 [5]	4¼ "	
1720	4½ "	13 "	1752 [6]		

[1] Prices paid by Company to planters, though not necessarily an average for the year. These figures are derived from many official sources,—too many for enumeration.

[2] Brown sugar.

[3] In 1713, the current price in the open market was reported to be 4½–5 *rdl.* per 100 lbs.

[4] The St. Thomas officials reported the following prices for sugar: in Holland, 7–9 *rdl.*; St. Eustatius, $5\frac{1}{7}$ *rdl.*; and Curaçao, 7–8 *rdl.* per 100 lbs. *Martfeldt MSS.*, VI (February 3, 1748).

[5] The governor and council on St. Croix set the price at 3½ *rdl.*

[6] The St. Croix authorities raised the price of sugar to 4¼ *rdl.* and fixed the price of cotton at 13 *sk.*, for unpacked, and 13½ *sk.* for baled cotton.

APPENDIX L

WEST INDIAN SUGAR EXPORTED FROM COPENHAGEN [1]

(1709–1754)

Year	*Quantity (lbs.)*	*Destination*	*Price secured by Company*
1709	8,950 br.	Lübeck	548 *rdl.*
"	6,804 "	Kiel	425 "
"	2,519 wh.	"	348 "
"	4,500 br.	"	281 "
"	1,274 wh.		179 "
"	100 "	Aarhus	
"	1,169 "		120 "
"	3,904 "	Lübeck	544 "
1710	5,000 br.	Dantzig	377 "
"	2,302 wh.	"	263 "
1711	4,000 br.	Lübeck	312 "
"	4,500 "	Kiel	351 "
"	1,600 wh.	"	233 "
"	2,160 br.	"	169 "
"	228 wh.	"	29 "
"	5 c. "	"	389 "
"	4 c. "	Dantzig	291 "
"	317 br.	Elsinore	
"	285 wh.	"	
"	200 "	Aarhus	
"	151 br.	"	
"	1 c. wh.	Kiel	94 "
"	1 c. "	"	60 "
"	42,544 br.	Kiel (?)	2,659 "
1712–20 [2]			
1721	6,296 br.	Lübeck	368 "
"	1,000 wh.	Elsinore	
"	1,084 br.	"	
1722	6,061 "	Dantzig	323 "
"	6,000 "	"	312 "

[1] *Udskiibnings og Passeer Sedlers Copie—Bog*, 1709–1754. This volume is included in a bundle, the label of which I failed to note. br. = brown sugar; wh. = white sugar; c. = casks (*Fade*). The marks and shillings are omitted.

[2] No sugar is recorded as having paid the one per cent. export duty during this period.

WEST INDIAN SUGAR EXPORTED FROM COPENHAGEN—*Continued*

Year	*Quantity (lbs.)*	*Destination*	*Price secured by Company*
1723	2,617 br.	Königsberg	136 *rdl.*
"	11,251 "	Lübeck	588 "
1724	12,170 "	Stettin	697 "
1725	15,284 "	"	875 "
1726	none		
1727	1,225 "	Lübeck	68 "
"	344 "	Flensborg	
"	800 "	Nyborg	
1728	232 "	Elsinore	
"	2,144 wh.	Dantzig	134 "
1729–30	none		
1731	426 wh. (?)	Bergen	
1732	230 wh. (?)	Christiania	
"	298 br.	Bergen	
1733	238 " (?)	Elsinore	
"	578 " (?)	Bergen	
1734	236 "	Aarhus	
1735	389 "	Bergen	
"	685 "	"	
1738	2 c. (?)"	Slagelse	
"	1 c. "	Elsinore	
1740	338 "	Aarhus	
"	250 "	Flensborg	
1741	58 "	Laurwigen	
"	211 "	"	
"	11,443 "	Stockholm	
1745	400 "	Aabenraa	
1746	350 sirup	Nyborg	
1747	2 c. br.	Holstein	
"	2 c. sirup	Randers	
"	64 wh. (?)	Ritt (?)	
1748	none		
1749	111,864 wh.	Stockholm	8,815 "
"	200 "	Aarhus	
"	27,747 br.	Stockholm	2,456 "
"	30 c. "	Lübeck	1,802 "
1750	4,206 "	"	240 "
"	10,966 "	Stettin	628 "
"	5,880 "	[St.] Petersburg	336 "
"	82,958 "[3]	Nordkiöping	4,752 "
"	27,766 "	Stockholm	1,590 "

[3] The entry of 80, 20, and 26 *Fade* apparently refers to the 82,958 lbs.

WEST INDIAN SUGAR EXPORTED FROM COPENHAGEN—*Continued*

Year	*Quantity (lbs.)*	*Destination*	*Price secured by Company*
1750	28,628 br.	Carlshafn	1,640 *rdl.*
"	200 "	Aarhus	
"	52,878 "	Nordkiöping	3,029 "
"	32 "	Randers	
"	200 "	Christiania	
"	230 "	Amsterdam	10 "
"	2,387 "	Dantzig	111 "
"	200 "	Aarhus	
"	1,249 "	Stettin	58 "
"	1,302 "	Dantzig	61 "
"	31,441 "	Stettin	1,409 "
"	3,218 "	"	146 "
1750	7,310 "	Dantzig	343 "
1751	39,739 "	[St.] Petersburg	2,276 "
"	1,589 "	Stettin	74 "
"	6,796 "	"	309 "
"	8,386 "	"	384 "
"	42,360 "	"	2,095
"	5,176 "	"	?
"	15,451 "	Lübeck	734 "
"	82,261 "	Stockholm	3,892 "
"	129,299 "	Bergen	
"	129 c. raw br.	Stockholm	
"	205,850 br.	Amsterdam	9,633 "
"	71,538 "	Stettin	3,539 "
"	37,987 "	[St.] Petersburg	1,780 "
"	153,474 "	Bergen	
"	82,984 "	Amsterdam [4]	3,848 "
"	6,632 "	"	310 "
"	64,994 "	Nordkiöping	3,034 "
"	86,294 "	Amsterdam	4,045 "
"	133,437 "	"	6,231 "
"	65,036 "	Stockholm	3,025 "
"	56,868 : "	Gothenburg	2,634 "
"	19,100 r. br.[5]	"	895 "
"	30,976 br.	Amsterdam	1,411 "
"	77,300 "	Odense	
"	92,182 "	Amsterdam	4,201 "
"	144,246 "	Bergen	

[4] These are the totals of seven shipments sent to P. de Wint.

[5] r. br. = raw brown sugar; r. s. = "raw sugar."

WEST INDIAN SUGAR EXPORTED FROM COPENHAGEN—*Continued*

Year	*Quantity (lbs.)*		*Destination*	*Price secured by Company*
1751	128,694	br.	Stettin [6]	6,032 *rdl.*
1752	55,714	"	Stettin	2,633 "
"	106,394	"	Odense	
"	29,775	r. s.	Gothenburg	1,199 "
"	144,712	br.	Bergen	
"	20,074	"	Gothenburg [7]	953 "
"	158,270	"	Bergen	
"	140,042	"	Odense	
"	3,428	"	Lübeck	187 "
"	11,517	"	Odense	
1753 [8]	101,038	"	Bergen	
"	84,023	"	Odense	
"	39,749	"	"	
"	117,176	"	Bergen	
"	78,729	"	Trondhiem	
"	74,219	"	"	
"	84,610	"	Odense	
"	87,477	"	Frederikshald	
"	56,554	"	Aalborg	
"	210	"	Korsör	
"	32,854	"	Aalborg	
"	38,592	"	Frederikshald	
1754	77,668	"	Odense	
"	134,819	"	Bergen	
"	151,727	"	Trondhiem	
"	904	r. s.	Mediterranean	46 "
"	69,373	br.	Frederikshald	
"	47,144	"	Aalborg	
"	112,320	"	Frederikshald	
"	5,015	"	Lübeck	
"	158,614	"	Trondheim	
"	102,946	"	Odense	
"	36,449	"	Amsterdam [9]	1,538 "
"	168,136	"	Frederikshald	
"	15,134	"	Aalborg & Viborg	
"	168,804	"	Bergen	

[6] Consigned to Iselin & Co.

[7] Consigned to Johan Froichen.

[8] The entries from the latter part of 1752 and after refer to sugar sent to the shareholders in the refineries in Odense, Bergen, Trondheim, Frederikshald and Aalborg, *Cf.* above, pp. 135–136.

[9] Consigned to F. Wever.

APPENDIX M

COMPANY'S RECEIPTS AND DEBTS AT ST. THOMAS (1688–1754)

Certain of the Company's Receipts at St. Thomas: compiled from the account books of the Danish West India and Guinea Company (*Rigsarkiv*).

Year	No. of planters	Poll and land tax	Customs receipts	Weighing fees	Debt of Co. to planters	Debt of planters to Co.
1688	.....	.....	489 *rdl.*	23	.....	
1689	.....	.....	550	57	.....	
1690	.....	.....	1,817	621	.....	
1691	.....	.....	30,155 [1]	8	.....	
1692	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1693	37	584 *rdl.*	5,162	35	.....	
1694–97	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1698	.....	.....	3,452	36	.....	
1699	32	653	.....	.....	.....	
1700	78	.....	2,643	72	.....	
1701	.....	.....	3,233	132	.....	
1702	.....	.....	3,065	27	.....	
1703	52	1,294	9,574	476	.....	
1704	59	2,585	5,653	270	.....	
1705	74?	2,716	4,112	183	.....	
1706	105?	2,715	3,361	219	.....	
1707	106	3,050	4,184	109	.....	
1708	109	2,872	7,027	121	.....	
1709	.....	.....	10,688	218	.....	
1710	103	3,282	11,114	100	.....	
1711	.....	4,201	9,959	240	.....	
1712	.....	4,504	10,634	305	.....	
1713	131	4,937	6,818	153	.....	
1714	130	4,838	5,818	145	.....	
1715	134	4,821	4,903	.....	.....	
1716	139	5,017	8,236	46	.....	
1717	132	5,029	5,778	.....	.....	
1718	131	6,140	5,619	84	.....	
1719	144	6,676	7,464	31	.....	
1720	152	6,683	8,869	1,995 [2]	.....	
1721	162	6,799	4,992	373	.....	
1722	188	6,905	3,099	.....	37,787	160,445
1723	188	6,971	7,144	11	75,876	177,120
1724	187	7,169	7,328	42	8,573	209,438
1725	205	7,891	7,749	279	80,197	210,129
1726	211	8,063	4,927	142	84,278	211,331
1727	215	8,078	5,208	511	67,044	200,486
1728 [3]	190	7,785	6,018	1,117	61,732	163,357
1729	182	7,123	5,335	252	41,960	160,473
1730	168	5,814	6,324	351	14,967	138,306
1731	166	6,769	6,884	447	12,033	102,277
1732	163	6,859	6,462	365	10,565	109,194
1733	171	6,891	6,489	409	22,972	123,241
1734	167	7,169	5,158	276	23,810	117,396

[1] See above, pp. 84–87, for story of seizure of Brandenburg goods.

[2] Includes moneys collected for several years past, and now disgorged by guilty official.

[3] Before 1729, the fiscal year ended in March, so the figures entered under 1728 refer to the year from March, 1728, to March, 1729. With 1730 the fiscal year is considered to end in December, and hence the records for 1730 apply only to eleven months.

COMPANY'S RECEIPTS AND DEBTS AT ST. THOMAS—*Continued*

Year	*No. of Planters*	*Poll and Land Tax*	*Customs Receipts*	*Weighing Fees*	*Debt of Co. to planters*	*Debt of planters to Co.*
1735	177	7,225	6,896	370	25,763	84,694
1736	158	6,440	6,306	469	28,758	87,580
1737	164	5,054	4,817	129	20,117	99,961
1738	158	5,452	7,524	703	2,558	119,750
1739	150	5,342	6,226	325	31,305	109,512
1740	149	5,087	4,366	543	14,096	143,488
1741	141	5,053	5,772	209	23,877	71,606
1742	145	5,153	8,186	591	26,035	82,956
1743	138	4,807	8,006	468	21,543	125,347
1744	143	4,798	8,083	561	12,216	126,378
1745	152	4,427	10,074	671	19,809	133,754
1746	153	4,474	21,512	1,221	24,805	193,315
1747	150	4,637	19,561	1,113	27,272	329,065
1748	151	4,945	21,667	1,041	41,301	357,931
1749	157	5,115	16,971	888	31,599	279,668
1750	163	5,335	12,226	989	71,159	317,279
1751	165	5,552	14,947	877	42,549	385,243
1752	151	5,551	10,448	773	83,611	443,376
1753	160	5,545	16,754	1,078	40,272	491,601
1754	168	5,745	10,830	1,036	34,409	503,515

APPENDIX N

COMPANY'S RECEIPTS AND DEBTS AT ST. CROIX (1741–1753)

Certain of the Company's Receipts at St. Croix: compiled from the account books of the Danish West India and Guinea Company (*Rigsarkiv*).

Year	*No. of Planters*	*Poll and land tax*	*Customs receipts* [1]	*Weighing fees*	*Debt of Co. to planters*	*Debt of planters to Co.*
1741			764 *rdl.*	52 *rdl.*	3,095 *rdl.*	41,171 *rdl.*
1742	84	2,807 *rdl.*	1,267	66	3,065	41,180
1743	122	2,589	972	64	2,949	49,863
1744	202	4,029	1,868	83	3,347	57,869
1745	199	4,662	1,773	108	12,464	76,058
1746	195	4,529	3,733	171	15,864	98,633
1747	207	5,158	8,202	250	20,313	136,007
1748	204	5,402	8,887	234	25,111	202,941
1749	218	5,830	9,139	286	35,187	79,642
1750	246	7,107	10,458	408	69,186	169,788
1751	288	7,587			26,465	392,425
1752	332	8,081	13,358	562	25,619	452,866
1753	355	8,624	13,976	673	16,125	562,089

[1] These totals, given in *rdl.* only, are those made up by the Company's officials. The greater number of the figures given exceed by 50 *rdl.* or more the totals derived from the Company's cash books, where the receipts are entered month by month.

APPENDIX O

CAPITAL INVESTED AT ST. THOMAS UNDER PLAN OF 1747[1]

	Fixed[2] *capital*	*Circulating*[3] *capital*	*Private*[4] *capital*	*Interest*[5] *paid*	*Rate of*[6] *interest*
1747	108,534	83,163		7,169	.037
1748	108,921	62,966	292,235	8,182	.047
1749	116,034	75,208	281,255	11,921	.062
1750	123,200	136,831	284,584	14,556	.056
1751	128,854	194,264	269,910	16,901	.052
1752	129,546	238,343	262,855	20,563	.056
1753	129,826	297,445	279,172	22,480	.052
1754	127,734	275,842	280,858	25,753	.063

[1] From *Negotie Journaler for St. Thomas.* See above, pp. 221–222.

[2] *Capital Conto vedk. Comps. faste og staaende Fond.*

[3] *Capital Conto vedk. Comps. circulerende Fond.*

[4] *Capital Conto vedk. Comps. particulaire Vahre og tilstaaende Gield.*

[5] *Interesse Conto.*

[6] The rate is calculated on the basis of the "fixed" and "circulating" capital, and the results are offered for what they may be worth.

APPENDIX P

THE COMPANY'S BUSINESS IN BROWN SUGAR

(An estimate based on its account books) [1]

Income		*Outgo* [2]	
Year	*Lbs.*	[*Year*]	[*Lbs.*]
1700 there came in	513,732	1700 waste [3] deducted	6,382
and	356,568	and	2,158
1701	94,456	1701 deducted	2,612
and	209,149	1702 "	6,052
1702 and 1703	560,545	1703 and 1704 nothing deducted.	
1704	726,683	1705	
1705	445,533	1706 } nothing [deducted].	
		1707	
1706	299,539	1708 waste deducted	205,869
1707	723,992		
1708 to May 4	378,779		223,073
	4,310,976		
	[4,308,976]		

During the period that the late Diderich Mogensen was factor, the waste deducted is found to have amounted to about five and a quarter per cent.

1709 there came in	1,036,048	1709 }	no waste deducted.
1710	659,212	1710 }	nor here either.
1711	93,085	1711 }	
1712	321,573	1712 deducted "without money."	
		Total	95,276
1713	554,660	1713 none.	

During this period, during the greater part of which likewise Diderich Mogensen was factor, the deducted waste is found to have amounted to a little over three and a half per cent.

1714	659,666	1714 }	no waste deducted.
1715	273,425	1715 }	
1716	131,114	1716	92,603
	1,064,205		

During Söeberg's term as factor, the waste is found to have amounted to a trifle more than eight and one-half per cent.

1717	694,576	1717 }	
1718	248,861	1718 }	
1719	513,713	1719 }	no waste deducted.
1720	617,944	1720 }	
1721	135,620	1721 }	

During Schnelfejl's and Jan Vlak's terms as factor, no waste is found to have been deducted in the books, hence the same brown sugar from those years remains, viz., 38,846 lbs. net, which makes a tolerable waste, viz., about one and three-fourths per cent., which waste will be deducted, in so far as it will be necessary to determine the actual stock on hand.

[1] Translated from *Secret-Protocollen for St. Thomas*, 1729–1730. This compilation was made by Philip Gardelin at the instance of the privy council of the island, about 1729.

[2] *For saa vidt som dend paa W. & T. Reigning afskrevne Leccage angaaer.*

[3] *Leccage.*

APPENDIX Q

THE COMPANY'S BUSINESS IN COTTON

(For factor Söeberg's time, according to the books) [1]

Income		*Outgo*	
Year]	*Lbs.*	[*Year*]	*Lbs.*
[1714	43,986	1714 delivered	38,093
1715	14,665	1715	15,386
1716 to Sept. 14	28,927	1716 to Sept. 9	27,423
	85,578	Stock delivered to Schnelfejl, according to books	1,923
			82,825
So he (Söeberg) may have charged against him only the stock that the books for 1713 indicate to have been on hand, which is	5,956	The Commission has decided that Söeberg must pay, for cotton taken out of the warehouse for Crone and himself	11,636
Hence there still remains on Söeberg's cotton account	927		
	94,461		94,461
Estimate of cotton [handled] in Schnelfejl's time.			
Received from Söeberg:			
Stock, acc. to books	1,923		
1716 from Sept. incl[usive]	757	1716 nothing delivered out.	
1717 until his death, Oct. 24	25,923	1717 to his death	6,775
Also for what Söeberg delivered in 1717, which he is credited with by the Commission, but not until now in the books	1,103	Stock at Schnelfejl's should then be	22,931
	29,706		29,706
[Cotton handled] in factor Jan Vlak's time.			
On hand	22,931		
1717 from Sept	3,479	1717 delivered from Oct. 10	10,991
1718	23,096	1718	37,412
1719	30,591	1719	26,970½
1720	26,786½	1720	30,407
1721 to May 15—on the 19th he was suspended—there came in	10,810	1721 to April 29	8,760½
		Delivered to Stage after being properly inventoried	915
For what Söeberg had delivered in 1718 according to Jan Vlak's own account, with which the Commission has credited him, but which has not been observed until now	1,685	Hence Vlak has fallen short in his cotton account	8,592½
. . . [] *abus* which ought to be deducted from the capital account	4,670		
	124,048½		124,048½

[1] From *Secret-Protocollen for St. Thomas* (1729–1730), compiled by Ph. Gardelin at instance of St. Thomas privy council, about 1729.

APPENDIX R

RETURNS ON COMPANY'S CAPITAL

"Gewinst og Verlies Debet til Capital Conto" . . . "saameget er udi dette Aar vide Gewinst og Verlies Reigningen, Gud være ærit, netto vundet som paa Capital Conto p[er] Saldo hentransporteres."

Numbers in parentheses refer to months, thus: 4 = April.

Year	*Rdl.*[1]	*Year*	*Rdl.*
1688	3,825	1715	
1689 (4–10)	748	1716	4,506
1690	1,669	1717	12,016
1691	35,998	1718	8,698
1692	no acc't	1719	12,650
1693 [2]	642	1720	25,095
1694–97		1721	10,222
1698 (Aug.) – 1700 (Feb.)	14,020	1722	12,973
		1723	25,036
		1724	28,386
1700	14,825	1725	21,792
1701	2,904	1726	[loss—662]
1702 (2–6)	5,948	1727	14,729
1703	29,180	1728	8,698
1704	18,844	1729	35,386
1705	6,678	1730	15,704
1706	5,183	1731	26,449
1707	22,899	1732	28,073
1708	18,885	1733	39,760
1709	26,008	1734	2,525
1710	32,312	1735	29,610
1711	21,366	1736	15,561
1712	30,998	1737	4,782 [3]
1713	12,163	1738	15,165 [4]
1714	30,879	1739	11,932

[1] The marks and skilling are omitted here.

[2] The Thormöhlen and Arff leases covered most of this period.

[3] "Because of the many expenses in connection with St. Croix."

[4] *"Gewinst til Capital Conto burde være mere, da der paa Negere de Robert Stewart og Cornelis Marskalk ere vundne mindst 6,000 rdl., men det beregnes 1739."*

RETURN ON COMPANY'S CAPITAL—*Continued*

Year	*Rdl.*	*Year*	*Rdl.*
1740	8,912	1748	34,531
1741	15,991	1749	21,323 [1]
1742	8,929	1750	19,384
1743	15,040	1751	24,684
1744	20,265	1752	20,159
1745	23,278	1753	34,211
1746	32,363	1754	28,567
1747	29,418		

[1] "*Vedk Comps. particulaire Vahre og tilstaaende Gield.*"

APPENDIX S

ST. THOMAS STATISTICS: MISCELLANEOUS (1700–1708; 1723–1754)

	Salaries	*Governor's table*	*Interest account*	*Value of Christianfort*	*Ammunition account*
1700	3,151 *rdl.*	.....	.....	9,750 *rdl.*	4,825 *rdl.*
1701	3,279	.....	.....	9,750	4,757
1702	1,085	.....	.....	9,750	6,561
1703	4,694	.....	.....	9,750	6,213
1704	.....	.....	.....	9,750	5,900
1705	3,989	.....	.....	9,750	5,835
1706	2,978	.....	.....	9,750	5,874
1707	3,082	.....	.....	9,750	5,783
1708	.....	.....	.....	9,750	6,025
1723	6,368	5,951[1]	6,620	10,570	4,988
1724	10,665	.....	.....	10,570	4,410
1725	10,318	.....	.....	10,570	4,902
1726	6,026	.....	3,109	10,570	4,605
1727	10,323	.....	347	10,570	4,924
1728	7,211	671	5,876	10,570	5,651
1729	8,359	671	25,313	10,570	5,780
1730	13,501	671	10,457	10,570	5,700
1731	9,145	671	11,009	10,570	5,721
1732	9,121	671	18,208	10,570	6,078
1733	9,389	671	6,925	10,570	5,547
1734	7,912	671	3,265	20,385	4,606
1735	8,189	.....	18,130	22,627	3,904
1736	8,525	.....	3,849	.....	4,528
1737	10,251	.....	1,065	.....	4,509
1738	9,461	.....	4,482	.....	4,738
1739	10,820	.....	3,056	.....	4,629
1740	9,983	.....	1,940	.....	4,527
1741	10,626	.....	1,911	.....	4,142
1742	10,203	.....	2,421	.....	4,141
1743	9,484	.....	2,137	.....	3,835
1744	8,338	.....	3,303	.....	3,399
1745	8,418	.....	3,471	.....	3,997
1746	8,960	.....	4,445	.....	3,982
1747	9,827	.....	7,169	10,000	4,537
1748	9,360	.....	8,182	"	3,011
1749	10,036	.....	11,921	"	3,201
1750	15,553	.....	14,556	"	4,607
1751	13,482	.....	16,901	"	4,523
1752	14,057	.....	20,563	"	4,553
1753	14,557	.....	22,480	"	5,333
1754	13,633	.....	25,753	.....	4,544

[1] This represents the accumulated expenses of several years. Governors Crone and Bredal each had long, tedious disputes with the directors concerning allowances for table expenses.

APPENDIX T

ST. CROIX STATISTICS: MISCELLANEOUS (1742–1753)

			Lost or gained on				
	Salary[1] *account*	*"Interest account"*	*Princess plantation*	*LaGrange plantation*	*Value of*[2] *Princess*	*Value of*[3] *LaGrange*	*Profit on*[4] *capital*
1742	4,826	539	4,173		23,540		4,752
1743	4,635	983	4,134		25,005		4,426
1744	4,266	1,616	2,781		25,162		4,763
1745	5,769	2,524	2,254	—46	26,097	3,520	7,446
1746	7,128	4,370	4,383	—194	26,178	3,770	14,902
1747	5,822	6,622	11,023	—617	38,088	8,216	37,002
1748	6,732	11,127	—4,064	—4,509	60,889	11,716	
1749	8,314	4,207	1,614	—1,635	65,559	14,947	6,820
1750	10,256	38,660	1,493	—1,107	67,718	14,676	
1751					67,966	14,595	
1752	10,845	23,791	8,236	—337	78,568	38,660	40,291
1753	9,739	29,778	9,353	—655	78,888	39,930	50,365

[1] *Sallario Conto.*

[2] The Princess plantation lay a short distance northwest from Christiansted; La Grange, on the shores of West End Bay. Both belonged to the Company. See map of St. Croix, opposite p. 248.

[3] The writer makes no attempt to explain the apparent discrepancy between the inventory value of LaGrange plantation, and the losses recorded against it. The accounts of the Company often arouse fear and wonder rather than understanding in the observer. Perhaps they fulfil thereby their intended mission.

[4] These figures seem to represent the returns on the capital invested by the Company upon St. Croix.

APPENDIX U

LIST OF SHAREHOLDERS IN THE ROYAL CHARTERED DANISH WEST INDIA AND GUINEA COMPANY, AND SHARES HELD IN THE COMPANY AND REFINERY IN THE YEAR 1751 [1]

	Company shares	*Refinery shares*
1. Det Kongelige Huus.		
Hans Kongl, Mt. Vores Allernaadigste Konge	8	2
Hendes Mayt. Dronningen Lovise	4	1
Hendes Kongl. Höihed Princesse Charlotte Amalia	16	4
2. Præses.		
Hans Höi Grævel. Excel. Hr. Geheime Raad og Oberhofmarechal Adam Gotlob Moltke	8	2
3. Directeurerne.		
Hr. Justitz Raad Peter Lemvig	10¾	2
Hr. Etatz Raad Herman L. Klöcker	8	2
Hr. Agent Johan Friderich Vewer	7	2
" " Joost von Hemmert	8	2
4. Hoved Participanterne.		
Hr. Etatz Raad Johannes Valeur	5½	1 3/9
" Capitaine Jesper Richardt	7	1¾
" Justitz Raad Oluf Blach	8	2
5.		
Sr. Hans Christian Oelgoed	8	2
" Peter Boertman	7	3
6. Participantere.		
Hans Hoy Grævel. Excel. Hr. Ferdinand Anthon Græv af Danneschiold til Lauerwigen	9	3
Hr. Feldtmarschal og General Schulenborg	4	1
Hr. Geheime Raad von Berchentin	4	1
Afg. Hr. Geheime Raad von Schulin	4	1
Hans Excel. Hr. Vice Statholder Geheime Conferentz Raad Jakob Benzon	20½	4¾
Hr. General og Commandant M. Numsen	8	2
Hr. Geheime Conf. Raad Claus v. Reventlau	2	1

[1] From *Werlauff MSS.* No. 22, Royal Library. On account of the impossibility of finding exact equivalents for many of the titles, they are transcribed as they are found in the manuscript, nor is any attempt made to correct the transcriber's spelling.

LIST OF SHAREHOLDERS—*Continued*	*Company shares*	*Refinery shares*
Afgt. Hr. Geh. Conf. Raad og Baron Gersdorf	2	
Afgt. Hr. Geh. Conf. Raad Græve af Gyldensteen	7	1 3/9
Afgt. Hr. Geheime Raad og Baron Christian Gyldencrone	1¼	1¼
Hr. Geheime Raad Carl von Holstein	2	½
" " " Fridrich W. von Holstein	2	½
" " " von der Osten	8	2
" " " og Baron von Dehn	4	1
" " " Demerciere	2	½
" " " Victor von Plessen	4	1
" " " Eggert. Christ. v. Linstow	5	2
" " " Otto Kot	1	1
" " " Oberhofmester von Juel	2	½
" " " Ober Jægermester von Gram	4	1
" " " Ober Kammer Junker v. der Lühe	3	¾
Afgt. Stiftamtmand Adolph Andreas von der Lühe Ridder	5	2
Hr. Stiftamtmand Holger Scheel Ridder Johan Albrecht Vith Ridder	2	1
Hr. Vice Admiral Friderich Hoppe	2¼	3/9
Hr. Vice Admiral Wilhelm Lemvig	3/9	½
Hr. Envoyé Extraordinaire Walther Titly	4	1
Hr. Kammer Herre Buchwaldt	4	1
" " " Christian von Stöcken	5	1
" " " von Staffelt		1
" " " Willum Berregaard	10	2½
Frue Geheime Raadinde Enke af Holstein	4	1
Frue Grævinde Knudt	8	2
" " Amalia Georgine von Schmettau	1	¼
Fröken Hofmesterinde von der Osten	12	3
Afg. Frue Baronesse von Gersdorf	12	2
Frue Wibeke Krag Generalinde von Eindten	1	3
Frue Generalinde von Stöcken	4	1
Hr. Conferentz Raad Hans Seidelin	4½	½
" " " Schöller	2	½
" " " afgt. Carl von Brandt	2	2
" " " afgt. Lars Benzon	2½	1
" " " Baron Matthias von Gyldencrone	1	¼
Frue Conferentz Raadinde Rostgaard	10½	2½
Hr. Etatz Raad Friderich Holmsted	13½	
" " " Gregorius Klauman	8	2¾
" " " Laurits Munck	2	½
" " " Johan F. Friis	8	2

LIST OF SHAREHOLDERS—*Continued*	*Company Shares*	*Refinery Shares*
Afg. Etatz Raad Severin Wartberg	3	¾
" " " Thomas Bartholin	2½	2
Frue Etatz Raadinde Weyse	2½	1
Kammer Jomfrue Packo	4	1
Hr. Hof Predicant Bluhme	3	
Hr. Lt. (?) Able le maire	1	¼
" Oberst Lieutenant Hans Albert von der Lühe	1	
" " " " Christian Schöller	1	¼
Frue Anna Stokfleth Sl. Oberste Brugmans	1	¼
Hr. Major Friderick Schöller	1	¼
" Brand Major Johan Boye Junge	1	¼
Frue Commandeur Mühlenforts	4	1
Kammer Junker Adam Levin von Dincklage	3	
Hr. Commandeur Capitaine Gyntelberg paa Hr. Cancellieraad Laurentz Kreyers Nafn	3	2
Hr. Justitz Raad Diderick Chr. Lemvig	¼	¾
" " " Schröder	1	¼
" " " Putschier	3	¾
" " " Johan Finckenhagen	2	¼
" " " Bredo Munthe	4	1
" " " Henrich de Hielmstierne	2	½
" " " Anthon Fabritius	1	1
" " " Klarup	1	1
" " " Christian Lintrup	5	½
" " " afg. Iver Jentoft	½	1
Hr. Agent Just Fabritius	5	1
" " Pieter van Hurk	1	1
" " Herman de Place	4	1
afgh. Andreas Biörn	43	4¾
Fr. Justitz Raadinde Henrichsen	4	1
Hr. Capitaine Michael Johan Herbst	2	½
" " og Reg. Qv. Mester Peter Kellerman	1	¼
" " afgt. T. G. Vieth	1	¼
Hr. Cancellie Raad Hans Riegelsen	2	¾
" " Simon Borthuus	2	½
Hr. Kammer Raad Rasmus Fugl	2	½
" " " Georg Henrich Johan Schmieden	2	½
" " " Jens Erick Hauck	1	1
Hr. Consistorial Raad Provst Mathias Hvid	2	½
Fröken Margrethe Lemvig	2	½
Frue Assessor Johan Laverentzen	2	¼
Hr. Raadmand Thomas Ziemer	4	
" " Hans Holst de Place	6	1

LIST OF SHAREHOLDERS—*Continued*

	Company shares	*Refinery shares*
Hr. Raadmand Johan Fridrick Holmsted	1	2
" " Johan Didrich Bechman	2	½
Hr. Apothequer Christopher Herfort Mangor	1	¼
Hr. Laugmand Johan Arndt Jentoft	2	¼
Hr. Rg. Qvart. Mester Otto Borthuus	5	¾
Hr. Inspecteur og Landsdommer P. Kraft	2	½
Hr. Borgemester Johan Daniel Baiur	6	1
Hr. Vice Borgemester Gabriel Ferdinand Milan	2	½
Hr. Secreterer Bretonville	4	1
" " Denis Lucass	1	¼
Hr. Johan de Lehn	2¼	1
Hr. Friderich de Peloy	1	¼
" Thomas Blixenchiold	2	½
" Peter Henrich Meyer Ober Kiöbmand og 2den Stemme i det Secrete Raad i Tranquebahr	2	½
" afgt. Johannes Laurens von Castenschiold	5	½
" afgt. Commandant paa St. Thomas Friderick Moth	5	½
Hr. Christen Höst	1	½
Hr. Slotsforvalter Bernhard Voldenberg	1	1
Söe Qvæsthuuset i Kiöbenhafn	20	
Hr. Taxadeur Jæger		¼
" Johan Ludvig Abbestee	1	¼
" Lyder Schielderop	8	2
" Johan Christopher Cramer	1	1/9
" Abraham Pelt	4	1
" Peder Morbeck	1	1
" Reinhard Iselin		3/9
" Johan Friderich Giöring	4	1
" Andreas Kellinghuusen	2	½
" Peter and Johan Wasserfall	1	½
" Johan Conrad Colsman	1	1/9
" Henrich Peter Werner	1	¼
" Niels Schöt	4	1
" Sven Köbke	2	½
" Fridrich Barfoed	1	1/9
" Carl Fitzman	½	½
" Herman Murcken	1	½
" Povel Pletz	2	1/9
" Christopher Bartholin	2½	
" Eggert Rasmusen	1	1/9
" Johan Lyders	2	½
" Arnoldus de Fine Olivarius	2	
" Peter Ursin	1	

LIST OF SHAREHOLDERS—*Continued*	*Company shares*	*Refinery shares*
Hr. Johan Jürgen von Bergen	1	
" Joseph Zyber	2	½
Mr. Pierre Boue & Sohne	2	½
" Morten Kirchetorp	1	¼
afg. Casserer Daldorph	5	2
" Messieurs Johan Peter Isenberg & Sohn	4	1
[afg.?] Martin Værn	8	1½
Casserer Johan Fridrich Dalen	5½	1
Equipage Mester Christian Fridrich Irgens	1	
Bogholder Peder Brandorph	1	¼
Andreas Lossejus Dreger	1	
Madame U. Johannes Colsman	1	1/9
" de la Tour	1	
Jomfrue Marie Kirstine Meyer	4	1
" Christine Deichman	1	¼
" Catharina Elizabeth Colsman	1	¼
" Marie Gerdrant Colsman	1	¼
Gud giv Lykke og Velsignelse	4	1
N. B. Hr. Etatz Raad Klaumann. Meliora Speramus.		
N. B. Hr. Biskop Pontoppidan	2	½
Meliora Speramus.		
N. B. Hr. Professor Reus	2	½
Devise: A. M. T.		
N. B. Hr. Terchelsen	4	1
Devise: G. C. B. & C. F. B.		
N. B. Casserer Dahlen		1
Devise: B. J. M.		
N. B. Bertel Jacobsen Möller	1	
Jomfrue Anna Catharina Hermanst	½	
" Maria Catherina de Riddere	½	
Hr. Hieronymo Alberto de Lindeman Baron de Nevelstein	5	1
" Johannes Henricus Emmerechts	1	
" Pierre François Hermans. Madame Angela Borckelman H. L. Franciscus van te Wenter Enke	1	
Hr. Guillaume de Troy (?)	2	½
" Jan Bap^{tus} Bosch	2	½
D'Heer François Joseph Chapel	2	½
Hr. Poul Jacobs	1	¼
" Charles Joseph de Man	2	½
" Johannes Jacobus Moretus	16	4
" Cornelius von Winghen	3	¾

LIST OF SHAREHOLDERS—*Continued*	*Company shares*	*Refinery shares*
D'Heer Henry Geelhand Heere van Mersen	12	3
Hr. Caspar Baudier	4	1
" Anthoine Andre Dendon	4	1
" Louis François de Coninck	8	2
Jouffrouw Maria Catharina Wermoelen	2	½
Hr. Jean Roggens	2	½
" Thomas Josephus de Bie	4	2
" Anthonio Gerhardo Wellens	4	1
" Jacobus Theodorus Wellens	5	1
" Peter Anthon Wellens	8	2
" Norberto Lovies de Vael	12	4
" Josephus de Potter	1	1
" Jean F. M. Lunde	8	2
" Gotfriede Ullens	4	1
" Pieter Nic de Vos	4	2
" Jean Bastyn	4	1
" Fransiscus Emanuel van Ertborn	12	3
" Joan Kramp	2	½
" Josephus Albertus Bartelo	2	
Chevalier Engelbertus Maria Borrekins	8	2
Hr. T. de Jonge	6	1½
Madame Weduve Arnoldt de Pret	4	1
Madame Maria Isabella Clare Goris	4	1
Hr. Gotfried Josephus von Possenrode (?)	4	1
" Johannes Josephus & Judærus (?) Hubertus Pelgrom	2¼	
" Michael Auvray	4	1
" Johannes Josephus Pelgrom	1	
" Joan Bap^{to} Guielmo Joseph Vicomte de Fraula Heere van Rosier bois	8	2
Juffrouw Anna Philippina & Isabella Regina Reyns	1	
D'Heer Balthazar Moretus	8	2
" Charles Vilain XIII	1	
Hr. Theodorus Meulemaer	2	½
Hr. Baron W. von Krassow	3	
Madame Maria Boon Weduve van de Heer Jacques Schenaerta	4	1
Hr. Adrian Jansen	1	1
D'Heer Jean François Le Grelle, Cum Uxore Maria Isabella Broeta	4	1
" Guillielmus F. Le Grelle	4	1
" Norbert Goris	6	1
" F. F. Moretus	4	½
Joncker Petrus van Schorel Heer van Vilryk	2	

LIST OF SHAREHOLDERS—*Continued*	*Company shares*	*Refiner shares*
Joncker Joannes Bap^to Cock Scheppen	1	
D'Heer Peter Neyhaus	4	1
Me. Vrouw I. B. Cogels	24	1
Hr. Petrus Verbert	1	
D'Heer Jan Henry Lienard	4	1
" Joncker Petrus van Schorel Heere van Vilryck, en de Vrouwe Anna Maria de Clewes	2	1
Hr. Petrus Reneus van Maes	1	
D'Heer J. G. Knyff	8	2
D'Heer Michael Joannes Anthonius Kuyff	1	
" Jodocus Morell	4	1
Hr. Adrian Vleshouwer	4	1
Juffrouw Joanna van Laer	4	1
D'Heer Anthonia Le Begge	4	1
" Jean Joseph Pintens	2	½
" Charles I. Roose	4	1
Me. Vrouw Maria Theresia Carolina Knyff Douarière [1] van Joan Carlos Bosschardt	12	3
D'Heer Jean Andre Pietier	4	1
D'Heer F. F. Stevens	7	1½
Madame La Douarière van Collin de Bomhout	2	½
D'Heer Joan van Eersel	4	1
Hr. Bernardo Rottier	2	½
" Jan B. F. Torfs	2	½
" F. Xaverius Pick	2	½
Dame Anna Maria Catharina van den Branden Douarière van de Heer Carlo Francisco de Bosschardt	4	1
Hr. Guilliame Vrancke à Löven	4	1
" Franciscus Engelgrave	4	1
D'Heer Jean Alexander Guyot	4	1
Me. Juffrouw Isabella von Laer	2	½
D'Heer Josephus Alexander de Pauw	2	½
" Peter Jaspers	2	½
Hr. Petrus Joannes von Setter	4	1
" Noe Hellin	2	½
" Jean Charles Cocqueel	4	1
" Guilielmo Carlo Lunden	8	2
" Joes E. Pieters	4	1
D'Heer James Dormer	4	1
Hr. Samuel Diderick Mutzenbecker	1	¼
" Bosanquet	2	1
Madame Sal. Herman Rendorfs	2	½

[1] Dowager.

LIST OF SHAREHOLDERS—*Continued*	*Company shares*	*Refinery shares*
Hr. Jon François Maximilian de Baltin Raedt en Secretarius der Stadt Antwerpen	2	½
Hr. Leonardus de Bie	2	
Juffrouw Isabella François de Bie	2	
Me. Vrouw de Weduwe van de Heer François Mols	4	1
Summa	1,000	250

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